# KINGS OF ARABIA

HAROLD F. JACOB C.S.I.

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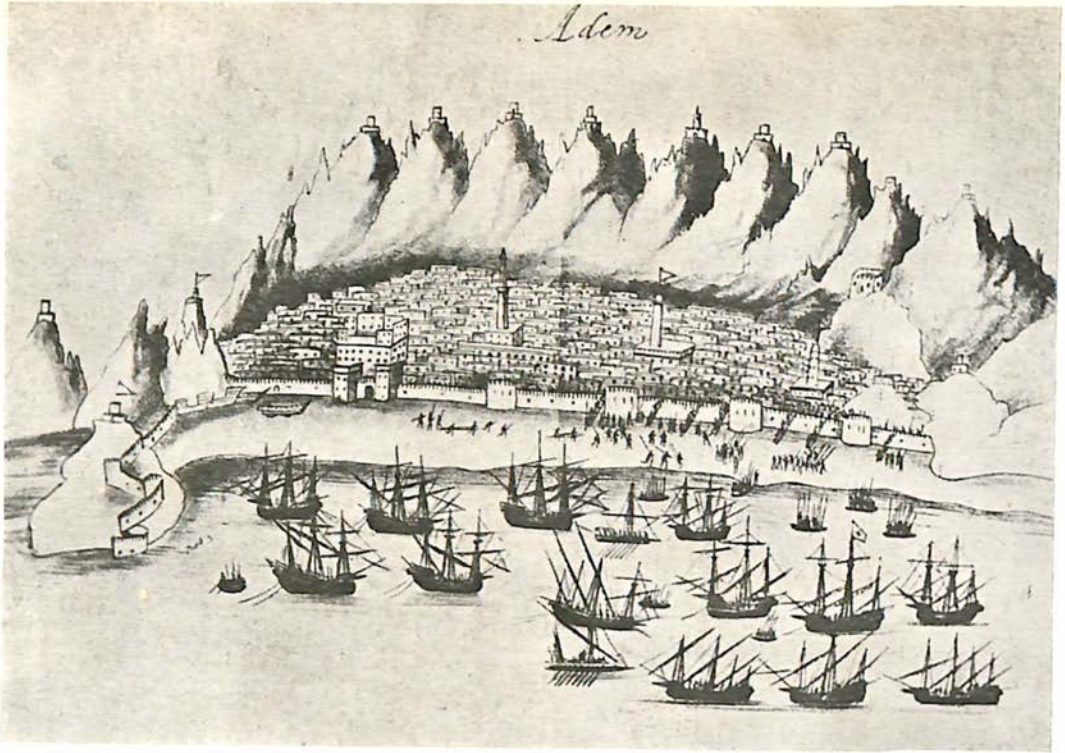
# KINGS OF ARABIA




ADEN IN THE YEAR 1512. [*Frontispiece*

# KINGS OF ARABIA

## THE RISE AND SET OF THE TURKISH SOVRANTY IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA

By

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# AL JAMÎLA

"OUT OF WHOM, THE PERFECTION OF BEAUTY, DOTH GOD SHINE"

*Sûryâpâye na khalu kamalaṁ pushyati svâmabhikhyâṁ*
—The native beauty of the Lotus dies with set of Sun.

# PREFACE

THIS is no geographical treatise, but just a political sketch. The place-names of the Yemen are but little known, and I propose at some more convenient season, Insha Allah! to note on them. I have thought it wise to discount a scholarly transliteration of proper and place-names. I write, for instance, KATABA, and not قَطَبَة: DALA, and not الضَّالِع: SANA and not صَنْعَا. Again, I do not distinguish between the two K's, or S's, or H's. The scholar will in most cases gauge the distinction, and the general reader will prefer to slur over the words, for, as a rule, he does not pronounce them audibly. The use of "Q" for the letter ق savours of barbarism. I tried this symbol years ago, and was rebuked by the Government-printer, who converted my symbol to "Qu" on the analogy of the English orthography! The various dots and diacritical marks I mostly omit. The letters ض and ط are variously transliterated according to the vagaries of the various schools. I should favour the symbols "ḍ" and "ṭ" respectively, but the dots in their frequency distract the eye. Certain symbols, however, are essential. "Dh" stands for the letter ذ and has the sound of "th" in *that*. When underscored as "Dh," it stands for ظ. This letter has a sound

most grammarians murder. It is pronounced by placing the tip of the tongue on the upper palate just behind the front teeth and then saying "dth"; while with the letter ض you utter the like sound with your tongue up against your side teeth of the upper jaw. Arabs take pride in the fact (?) that no non-Arab can pronounce this letter; hence the saying of the Prophet: "*I am the most eloquent of those that utter the letter* ض"—that is, Arabs. But this is no Arabic grammar.

The "th" of *thing* represents the letter ث, which in India, Persia, and Egypt has the sound of an "S." The guttural ع ('ain) is the sign ‘, or comma inverted; while "gh" stands for غ (ghain). This latter resembles the French "R," *grasseyé*, and so the Gallic spelling of *razzia* which we slavishly copy. The "Kh" of MOKHA is the "ch" in our word *loch*.

As to diphthongs: I have used "ai" as in *aisle*, when the word is so pronounced, and otherwise "ei" as we get it in *Seine*; "au" is the sound as in *cow*. The long vowels are topped with a circumflex, which is omitted in place-names well known.

With the Arabs, I keep the article in AL HIJAZ and AL YEMEN. The French spelling HEDJAZ is explicable, since they lack our English "J" sound; hence their DJIBOUTI and DJINN. YAMAN or YAMEN I discard, and, shorn of the article, these offend both ear and eye; as well write "Mackintosh" without the definite prefix, or oust the article from AL JANNA, Paradise; or, conversely, prefix it to JAHANNAM, which to an Arab would suggest a new brand of hell!

There exists, true, AL JAHIM, but this is another, and lower, Inferno.

The letter *'ain* has ever been a stumbling-block, and to Haines the letter suggested an aspirate, so he wrote *Hydroose* for *'Aidrûs*. In the War, the Military made a like error. Demanding whence he came of a man arriving from a visit to the cenotaph of the Yafrus Saint IBN 'ALWÂN, situate in the cluster of houses called DAR YUNIS and MUS'ABAIN, they were given the saint's name, and then christened the cluster as HALWÂN!

I have rejected the double "s" in HUSEIN and in IDRISI, for there is no *shadda* or duplication. So, to, the final "h," of MECCA, AL MEDINA, and JEDDA is superfluous. This letter is a *tied-up* "t," and not the *butterfly* "h." as in ALLAH and ABDALLAH. Such a "t," where the word stands alone, the Arabs do not utter; compare ZIÂRAT in India, but Arabia, ZIÂRA. The article AL is better than EL, and not even Egypt would dare to write ELLAH for God! Lastly, I have kept the well-known spelling of MECCA and JEDDA for the pedantic, though correcter, MAKKA and JIDDA or JUDDA.

A word regarding the photos. Some are my own, some are my friends', and I am especially indebted to Captain D. T. Richardson, M.C., R.A.M.C., who is a first-class caricaturist. The well-known Aden photographer, Mr. J. M. Coutinho, has kindly contributed others. The hero of the book is Haines, and I searched everywhere for his portrait. At last I was fortunate, and found what I now produce from the possession of Sir Hormusjee

Cowasjee of Aden, with whose family Captain Haines was on the most intimate terms.

As to the work as a whole, I crave the reader's indulgence. If I have erred on the side of prolixity, my excuse is the intricacy of my subject, and the absorbing interest of my ruling passion,

THE VERDANT YEMEN.

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# Kings of Arabia

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE RISE OF THE TURKS

In 1258 A.D. Baghdad of the Abbasid Caliphs was sacked by the Mongols and the Caliph al Mustakim was strangled. His son Al Dhahir took refuge in Egypt, where the Sultan Baibars gave him hospitality and appointed him spiritual Caliph under the style of Al Mustansir-billah. Sixteen of his successors inherited this mock suzerainty till in 1517 A.D. Sultan Selim I conquered Egypt and automatically became Caliph, handing the office down to his successors, who to this day retain it.

Under the first four Caliphs, who lived at Al Medina, as well as under the Ummaiyids of Damascus, the Hijaz and its two sacred cities was the prerogative of the Commander of the Faithful, who governed by his agents. Under the Abbasids the sacred province remained dependent on the Central Power till 1034 A.D., when the Commander of the Faithful became a tool in the hands of Pretorian Turks. At this time the family of Aulad Muhammad Al 'Alawi, a Kureishi, declared his independence in the Hijaz. The Crusades from without, and the intrigues of Circassian women within, blinded the Caliph's eyes to this usurpation, and the Meccan Sherifs enjoyed their liberty till 1517 A.D.

Selim I was careful not to meddle with the Sherifian prerogative, and contented himself with the demand that his name be mentioned as Commander of the Faithful in the Friday prayers. Placated with Turkish gold, the Sherifs complied with the request.

In 1538 A.D., in the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent, the Ottoman fleet captured Aden. Their land forces, with Kamaran as a base, marched against Zabid, and in

1539 the whole coast of Arabia acknowledged the power of Suleiman. The Turkish forces proceeded still further inland, conquering as they went, and a Turkish Pasha sat as Governor-General in the capital town of Sana.

In 1599 the Yemen revolted, but Hasan Pasha after a series of battles restored order. The Zeidi Imam of the House of Sana was then Al Kasim bin Muhammad, who had the style of "The Renovator of Religion." This Kasim was a descendant of Yusuf al Da'i himself, the great-grandson of Al Hadi Yahya, who, after Al Kasim al Rassi, became the real reviver of the Zeidi House at *S'ada*.

This second Al Kasim bin Muhammad was the actual progenitor of the House of *Sana*. He began his Imamate in about 1006 A.H. or 1597 A.D. (see chap. vi.). He was followed by his son, Al Mu'aiyad billah Muhammad, in about 1620 A.D.

It was in his Imamate that after many fights the Turks were compelled to evacuate the Yemen in 1630 A.D.

It is very probable, as Playfair has stated,[1] that the withdrawal of the Indian trade from the Red Sea to the longer but more convenient route by the Cape of Good Hope made so distant and troublesome a dependency as the Yemen almost useless and hardly worth defending.

We shall see in later chapters what an incubus to the Turks was their Province of the Yemen. Better for their prestige had they never returned in 1849 A.D. !

On the withdrawal of the Turks in 1630 the Imams of Sana were supreme. The Imam Muhammad was succeeded in 1644 A.D. by his brother Isma'il, who assumed the style of "The Relier on Allah." This title is borne by the Imam Yahya to-day (1923). Imam Isma'il's reign was a glorious one. He was buried at Doran. After Isma'il came his uncle, Al Mahdi Ahmed bin Husein (1676), who extended his rule over Hadramaut and Aden. He was followed in 1682 by Isma'il's son Muhammad, one "Buttressed by Allah," who was succeeded in 1687 by Al Mahdi Muhammad, with whom the French in 1709 made a treaty at Mokha. This Imam resided at Mawâhib.

[1] Playfair copied from Haines.

In the reign of Imam Husein bin Kasim, styled Al Mansur billah, or " Victorious through Allah," there were misunderstandings between himself and the French East India Company, and Mokha was bombarded (1738 A.D.).

In 1763, when the Danish traveller Niebuhr went to Sana, he found there the Imam al Mahdi al Abbas, and, at that time, the Sherifs of Abu 'Arîsh had become independent of the House of Sana.

There is no need further to pursue the various holders of the Imamate.

In 1804 the Wahhabis of East-central Arabia, who may be styled the Puritans of Islam, directed a holy war against Turkish domination, and took possession of the Holy Cities. After a series of campaigns Muhammad Ali, the Pasha of Egypt, reconquered the Hijaz in the name of the Sultan of Turkey. This happened in 1813 A.D. The Sherifate's relations with Constantinople were never wholly amicable. When a member of one family of the Sherifs showed the cloven hoof he was summoned home, and another of a collateral branch substituted. Intrigue was rife. The Sultans would have made the Hijaz an ordinary Turkish province, but the power of successive Sherifs thwarted them. It was only in 1880 that the Sultan's Turkish Governors were able to form a stable administration.

Muhammad Ali of Egypt, after expelling the Wahhabis from the Hijaz, essayed to become himself lord of that province, and he coveted the mastery of the Yemen. He negotiated with the Imam of Sana, offering to restore to him his provinces, filched by his Governor the Sherif of Abu 'Arîsh, both in the lowlands of 'Asîr and in the Yemen proper, in consideration of an annual tribute of one lakh of dollars. The Imam himself was not averse to the proposal, for he distrusted the ultimate aims of the Turks.

In 1832 we witness the struggle for mastery betwixt the Porte and its Viceroy of Egypt.

In 1840 Egyptian troops were forced to evacuate the Yemen, and the seaport towns were handed over by the Porte to Sherif Husein bin Ali bin Haidar of Abu 'Arîsh.

This division of the Yemen by the Porte was the harbinger of all the subsequent ill feeling between the Turks and the Imam of Sana, and although in 1849 A.D. the Sherifs of Abu 'Arîsh were finally ousted from the Yemen lowlands, their place was taken by the Turks themselves, whose eyes were soon directed to the reconquest of the "Garden of the Yemen."

In 1850 the Turks were unsuccessful in establishing themselves at Shihr, on the Hadramaut littoral.

In 1856 they were engaged settling the affairs of the Hijaz, where they put in a Sherif of the 'Aun family.

The Sherifs of Mecca are descended from Hasan II, son of Hasan, son of Ali bin Abi Talib. One of their number, Sherif Kutâda bin Idris, wrested Mecca from Mukthir bin Isa, the last Amir of the dynasty of Al Hawâshim in 597 A.H.

Dhawi Zaid and Dhawi 'Aun are branches of the same stock. Abdal Muttalib was the last of the Dhawi Zaid who ruled in Mecca in 1297 A.H. Haidar Bey was one of his descendants. He was born and bred in Stamboul.

In 1869 the opening of the Suez Canal led the Turks to look still more closely to Arabian affairs, and from their base in the Hijaz they concocted their plans for subjugating the Yemen and 'Asîr, where their hold was precarious. In 1872 they established their Government in these places, and there they continued until the surrender of their forces to us at the ports of Hodeida and Aden after the Armistice of 1918. I shall reserve for other chapters an account of the Turkish régime in the Yemen, and their wars against the Imams of Sana, which terminated in 1911, just prior to, and because of, the Italo-Turkish War. I should like first of all to relate, as briefly as I can, the beginnings of our own relations with the Yemen, which culminated in the capture of Aden in 1839.

## CHAPTER TWO

### OUR EARLIEST TOUCH WITH THE YEMEN, CULMINATING IN THE CAPTURE OF ADEN IN 1839

In 1609 the first British ship to visit Aden was the *Ascension*, Capt. A. Sharpey. He was imprisoned for several weeks and his cargoes seized. Sharpey, on release, went to Mokha, which was then the mart for trade between India and Egypt. In 1610 Admiral Sir Henry Middleton was sent by the East India Company to trade. He arrived at Aden with three vessels and then went to Mokha. Courteously invited ashore, he was there treacherously attacked by Turks, eight of his men killed, and he and others bound and taken to the Pasha in Sana. An attack on his ship by 150 Turks was repulsed with great slaughter. The Admiral and his companions were after a time released and warned never to return to Arabia. Although Sana was then in the hands of the Turks, no Turk could travel up or down without a safe conduct from the Arab chieftains. In 1612 Captain Saris, with three ships, arrived at Mokha, and in 1618 Captain Shilling touched there, by request of Sir Thomas Roe, our Ambassador to the Great Mogul, and founded a factory.

The French were interesting themselves in the Red Sea, and had invaded Egypt in 1799. To anticipate a possible invasion by them of India, and to revive the lost trade of the Red Sea, we despatched a Naval force to cruise in the Red Sea. Colonel Murray occupied Perim, which was soon abandoned as waterless, and so useless. His force of 300 men repaired to Aden, where Ahmed bin Abdul Karim, Sultan of Lahej, Aden, and its dependencies, received the party most hospitably, and even offered Aden to the British.

[When in 1630 the Turks left the Yemen, the country fell to the Imams of Sana, and in 1728 Aden had been seized by the Lahej Sheikhs, who had thrown off allegiance to Sana.]

Dr. Pringle, too, was detailed by the Governor-General of India to the Imam of Sana, Ali Mansur, who ordered his governors of Mokha and Luhaiya to give him trading facilities. Two years later, Sir Home Popham tried to reach Sana to negotiate a commercial treaty, but was treated with indignity by the Governor of Mokha and his proposals were rejected by the Imam. Sir Home, a Knight of the Most Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem and "Ambassador to the States of Arabia," received, however, a cordial reception at the hands of the Sultan of Aden, the aforesaid Ahmed, who in 1802 entered into a Treaty of Amity and Commerce with Sir Home, by which the ports of Aden were opened to goods brought by British ships. After detailing the duties leviable, the Sultan pledged himself not to impose any extra charges on anchorage or custom-fees, "on pain of forfeiting the friendship and commercial intercourse of the British nation." *Inter alia*, it was enacted that British subjects, if registered, might claim the protection of the British flag, which was sacrosanct. Disputes between registered British subjects were to be referred to the British Resident, while disagreements between subjects of the Sultan and those of the British nation must be decided by the Arab laws of the country. A plot of ground in the present Crater was reserved for a British factory. The British nation would be subjected to no indignities, and "might ride without molestation horse, mule, ass, or any other beast they might deem proper." Further, a burial-ground was assigned for British subjects free of charge. A remarkable treaty this, when you consider the time and party concerned, for the European trader was not popular on that shore. Sultan Ahmad must have been a remarkable man. He was called the "Father of his People," a style still employed by the Arabs of the Lahej House. "It is sad to relate," remarked Haines in 1839, "that after the return of the troops from Egypt to India, both Aden and this treaty were alike forgotten, and the once flourishing city had already sunk into an insignificant village."

In 1817 the British Residence at Mokha was looted, and

THE CATHEDRAL-MOSQUE OF AL 'AIDRÛS
AS IT STANDS TO-DAY.

THE FAIR AT THE SHRINE OF THE FISHER-SAINT, SHEIKH AHMED.

a British officer insulted by the Governor. In 1820 the Fort of Mokha was stormed by a British Squadron, and an apology demanded and given. In 1821 a Treaty was signed with the Imam of Sana. Some serious discrepancies between the English and the Arabic renderings of the draft caused friction between the contracting parties, and the suspicious Imam refused to accept modifications. To prevent an *impasse* the British yielded on every point except on the *crux* in the sixth article, which stipulated that the servants of the factory must be amenable to the Resident alone. This treaty was never ratified, and soon became a dead letter. I hold the Imam's original copy. We shall see in the next chapter, and again in more recent times, how at one time the Imam, at another we, have made advances for a union, but the Fates have not been propitious. There is but one sane, strong Arab in the Yemen to-day. Where is the centripetal force that shall unite us twain?

I have stated above that in 1728 A.D. the Sheikh of Lahej, in the person of Fadl bin Ali, a Viceroy of the Imam of Sana, threw over the traces. He and the tribesmen of Yâfa', to the N.E. of our modern Protectorate, banded to seize Aden. They stipulated to enjoy the port revenues, each alternately. In 1735 the Lahej Sheikh expelled his colleague. His rapacity caused Aden's rapid decline. Seven years later the Yafais assassinated Fadl bin Ali. His son, Abdul Karim, succeeded, and reigned for eleven years. He left five sons, of whom Abdul Hadi reigned twenty-four years. He was succeeded by his brother, who died without issue and was succeeded by his brother Ahmad, thus verifying the prediction of the notable Saiyid of Aden, 'Aidrûs, whose descendant is to-day Aden's leading citizen. The curse was not causeless and came thus: in Abdul Karim's reign there was a dispute between the saîd Saiyid and the Sultan, and one of the latter's sons used angry words. Enraged at the insult to his holy calling, the 'Aidrûs invoked divine vengeance on the tyrant—that his posterity be blighted. So the elder sons of the family were childless, and the Abdali throne was occupied by the descendants of Abdul Karim's

younger brother Fadl. From this Fadl sprang Muhsin Fadl, who lost Aden to Haines. He was the sixth of the House of Abdali, and his descendants still sit as Sultans under the style of "Âl Muhsin."

Green, in his *Short History of the English People*, attributes our acquisition of Aden to the rising importance of Muhammad Ali, the Pasha of Egypt: "To defeat his system of protection over Syria and Arabia, where he stood across the two routes to India—the Red Sea and the Euphrates Valley, to which the invention of steamers had given increased commercial importance—Palmerston won from the Sultan a commercial treaty of Free Trade throughout the Ottoman Empire, and, to enforce it, required the cession of Aden, a sun-scorched fort, which from the crater of an extinct volcano dominated the entrance to the Red Sea."

We sought a convenient coaling-station in those waters. In 1829 coal was sent to Aden and landed at Seera Island. It was intended for the bunkers of the first steamer built in India, the *Hugh Lindsay*. "Owing to the indolence of the natives," says Haines, "and in spite of the promises of help made by the Sultan in consideration of receiving two 6-pounder field pieces, only 180 tons of coal were shipped in six and a half days." This fact and Aden's distance from Bombay temporarily displaced Aden in favour of Makalla, and "Aden once more sank into oblivion."

At this point I would insert some interesting sidelights kindly supplied me by Colonel Bagnold, R.E. (retired). They are extracts from the diary of his father Michael Edward Bagnold, who joined the Bombay Marine as Volunteer in 1802 and was transferred to the Bombay Army of the East India Company in 1804. He retired as a Major-General in 1846. Capt. Bagnold in 1825 while *en route* to take up the appointment of Brigade Major to the Northern Division of the Army fell in with the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone, who appointed him Resident and Political Agent at Mokha. I give his own words:

In 1827, convinced that Steam Communication with Europe must eventually take place by that route, and that Aden was the only port fit by nature for a Depôt, I proceeded thither, and, after a careful survey of the place, visited the capital, Lahej, where I succeeded in persuading the Sultan Muhsin to make an offer of the port and fortress to the British Government on the most liberal terms. This was unfortunately declined by Sir John Malcolm. The prediction I then made to him, namely, that we should expend hundreds of lives, lakhs of treasure, return to Aden, pray, fight and pray for what was then offered us a free gift, has been amply fulfilled.

Looking to Muhsin's character as evinced in his later dealings with Haines, I am inclined to think this his offer to Bagnold was insincere. Again, there are always the tribesmen to be propitiated. Major Bagnold left Mokha in 1828 on the abolition of that Residency. His work was eulogised by Sir John Malcolm. In 1838 the Governor of Bombay offered Colonel Bagnold the command of the Expeditionary Force to capture Aden, but his ill-health obliged him to decline. I would we had Bagnold's Mokha diary!

To revert to my story—the Bombay Government then sent Commander Haines, of the Indian Navy, along the Hadramaut littoral, if haply he might find suitable coal-depôts at Makalla or the isle of SOKOTRA. Haines made a rapid survey of 100 miles of coast in one month, and then sailed to KISHN, on the mainland to the North of Sokotra, to ask the MAHRA chief's leave to survey that island, for the Sultan of Sokotra is lord also of the Arabian littoral. Leave obtained, Haines arrived in 1834 at TAMARIDA, on the northern side. His survey over, he went to Bombay, and in October of the same year returned to KISHN in the *Palinurus* to parley over the purchase of Sokotra. The Government of India sanctioned 10,000 German crowns (Maria Theresa dollars) for this purchase, but added that the less money Haines paid out the more credit he would derive!

"Your personal knowledge of those chiefs and their character will enable you to negotiate with advantage to

*them*" (*sic*). He was told to expect on his arrival to find British troops in possession. The principal chief, Haines found obdurate. He would not part with his inheritance, though he admitted the island was worthless as a source of revenue. "The English," he said, "might take the island, but sell it I never will." A similar reluctance, or suspicion of our ulterior aims, caused the Sultan, before the Great War, to discountenance a revenue survey. To give the Sultan a thrill, troops were taken there, though not landed, and the Sultan was asked on board to view Britain's might. This was Gilbertian burlesque! *Hoc volo, sic jubeo, sit pro ratione voluntas.* The Arab loves his country, though oftentimes he is twitted with lack of patriotism! The saying goes: "A dirham struck in my own name is prized by me more than a dinar struck in another's." It is Whitman's "Perfumed solely with my own perfume." Sokotra is the gem of the Indian Ocean, and our activities must have given the Arabs many a sleepless night. They have a proverb: "Beware of the English if they put to sea."

Anticipating no difficulties, the Bombay Government had already sent a flotilla comprising the *Tigris* (Commander Robert Lowe), the *Shannon* (Lieut. Warry), and an armed *patteran* carrying a detachment of native infantry and artillery, with sappers, all under Capt. R. A. Bayly. The troops landed at TAMARIDA in spite of remonstrance, and stayed there for several months, and finally the Sultan was induced to conclude an agreement by which he allowed the landing on any part of the island of coal or other articles. This agreement was never ratified. In April, 1835, the *Coote*, eighteen guns, commanded by Capt. Rose, relieved the *Tigris*. The occupation of the island was disastrous. Heavy surf swamped one of the *Tigris*' boats, and men were drowned. Fever decimated the troops who were living on the lowlands, and scarcely a sound man was found to dig the graves. The detachment was withdrawn, and Sokotra in its turn abandoned. Had Government listened to the naval surveyors, and occupied the highlands of Jabal Hajar, this catastrophe might have been stayed. We recall the

similar sufferings in 1899, experienced by the scientific mission under Dr. Forbes and Mr. Ogilvie-Grant.

Baulked everywhere, the Government once more turned to Aden. In the course of his survey of the Arabian coast Haines had found the Sultan of Aden "the most inveterate plunderer of wrecks," notably in the case of the Madras ship *Darya Daula*, whose crew and passengers had been treated with the worst barbarity. Haines stood over to Aden, and remonstrated with the Sultan, who had allowed the plundered cargo to be sold in the bazar. So Haines was appointed as Commissioner and told to obtain satisfaction from the Sultan, and failing this to arrange for the purchase of Aden. He boarded the *Coote* at Mokha and arrived at Aden, where he was invited to meet the Sultan on the 4th January. Haines landed. The Sultan denied all knowledge of the ship, though the cargo was being sold in the town. Haines demanded 12,000 dollars, or the restitution of the entire property. This caused intense excitement locally, and the Sultan tried his best to alter Haines' decision. Large bodies of armed Bedouins were paraded before Haines' lodgings and threats were hurled, but Haines remained firm, and at last two-thirds of the property was restored and a bill at twelve months sight handed in for the remainder. Haines then opened negotiations for the amicable transfer of Aden. Great tact was required, for the Sultan "possessed all the cunning, avarice, and dishonesty of an Asiatic." The fear of his tribe prevented him openly giving up Aden, for they naturally would ask a share of the spoil. The Sultan demanded a regular stipend in return, "such as the Rajahs of India are wont to receive." Eventually he promised to transfer Aden when troops should arrive to take possession, and Haines stipulated to give him 8,700 crowns per annum. A few days later Haines pulled up in the *Coote's* pinnace to the head of the Bay (Steamer Point), and while passing Ras Hejuf saw his interpreter, with horses, who called lustily to him to pull in. He then learnt of a plot to secure his person and papers. This secret had been revealed by a female slave. As an Arab later on said to Haines, "God

truly favoured you throughout, or you would never have ruled over the destinies of Aden."

In September, 1838, Haines returned to Aden in the sloop-of-war *Coote* with a detachment consisting of an officer and thirty Europeans as a bodyguard, and with Lieut. Western of the Engineers, who later planned the fortifications of Aden. He at once demanded Aden's surrender as settled in January previously. He pitched his tents on Ras Tarshain (where now the Residency and gunner officers' quarters stand). No Arab can tell me the derivation of this word, which was probably *Farshain*. This latter word more fitly describes the *two* promontories which *spread out* their points into the sea and are called to-day Ras Tarshain and Ras Morbat.

The Sultan's son Ahmed called to say that the Sultan refused both the surrender of Aden and the restitution of the balance of the plundered property, unless Haines returned the bond already given. Ahmed would not credit Government's wish to possess Aden, for surely they would have seized the place, and he asked for Haines' credentials. These delivered over, Ahmed went to consult his father. On 27th October Capt. Denton went to the Crater for supplies and water for the *Coote*. These were refused. Haines wrote to the Governor that refusal was tantamount to a declaration of war. On the 30th Sultan Muhsin wrote from Lahej that sore feet precluded his rising from his couch, and he referred Haines to his son in Aden, who would settle the affairs to the mutual advantages of both parties. Ahmed wrote warning Haines to be careful; that his father exercised no authority over him; that the Bedouins recognised him (Ahmed) alone as their master, and would at a hint fall suddenly on the British party. A threat given that their throats would be cut, and tents and ships captured, induced Haines and his party to return to the *Coote*. On 20th November the pinnace, under Lieut. Hamilton, was fired on by matchlock men; two men were wounded, and the boat shot through in several places. Haines certainly had prevented the Sultan's date-boats from entering the harbour in return for their refusal to supply the *Coote*

with provisions, but after this last *contretemps* he ordered Denton to stop trade entirely. Skirmishes followed. On 14th December Ahmed called for a truce, which was granted, but all to no purpose; and from the Somali coast Haines received a letter enclosing a missive from young Ahmed offering the Tadjoura Somalis 200 crowns to refuse water to British ships, and to murder any British who landed. The arrival of H.C. schooner *Mahi* and the barque *Ann Crichton* laden with coal led the Arabs to believe the British were in real earnest.

On 11th January, 1839, "a very gallant skirmish" took place off Seera Island between the Arab Battery on the mole, manned by Egyptian gunners, and the *Mahi*, with two gun-boats. Two Englishmen were wounded, and from twenty to thirty Arabs killed and wounded.

In constant touch with the Bombay Government, Haines was averse to resorting to force. The Haushabi Sultan, to the North of Lahej, had given his daughter in marriage to the truculent young Ahmed of Lahej, and here was another person to placate if Aden were bought by us. Haines proposed he should get into touch with the interior tribesmen of the Fadli and Yafai, assuring them of British friendship, and encouraging trade. He believed this "masterly policy would arrest suspicion of our first encroachment." He advocated "extra patience, united with a cool, determined manner, by which to bring them to reason." In his optimism he believed it "could never be necessary to use force to effect the delivery of Aden, but he would be on the safe side," and he called for reinforcements, for "the Bedouin can never settle the division of even a bag of dates without many hours' wrangling." The best policy was "to let them fight amongst themselves, and in time they would cool down and listen to reason." Commander Denton was able to land and dig for water. It is a proof, surely, of how little we have done in Aden, that in 1923 Aden is still without fresh water. Many experts have come, seen, and propounded schemes, and gone away conquered. Aden has lacked the "Kruschen feeling."

The enemy, meantime, had mounted three guns on the North Pass (Main Pass to-day) and two others commanded the Eastern Bay (in the Crater), and the passage between Seera Island and the South Gate leading to Hukâṭ Bay and what we call MARSHAG, which is the corruption of the Arabic word MA'ÂSHÎK, a place where boats can "withdraw for shelter."

Haines had selected a coal-depôt on a sandy point and even ground, with sufficient water off it to enable a steamer to lay within 100 yards of the shore. This was the Ras Sheikh Ahmed, where to-day stands the Prince of Wales Bunder, behind which reposes in his shrine the fisher-saint Ahmed, who gave his name to the point and to the island opposite, which we unromantically call *Quarantine Island.*

Haines was precise, and offered the Sultan's envoys 8,000 dollars for Aden's surrender. This offer was translated to their master as 6,000 dollars, they hoping to pocket the difference! The Arabs of Aden were in communication with the Egyptian C.-in-C. in the Yemen to obtain his help in man power.

The sands were running out, and Aden's doom was sealed! Haines had called for reinforcements of Europeans and native artillery, aggregating 650 men, with sappers and miners; also a naval storming-party of 100 white ratings and 24 "Seapoys," together with a sloop of 18 guns, a brig of 10 guns, and a schooner and a cutter with one long gun apiece. Further, he stipulated for 24 to 28 guns of from 12 to 18 pounds calibre, to defend the main points *after capture*; and 2 guns for the Martello Towers on the N.E. hills. He pressed for a reserve force of 500 men, European and native, basing his calculations on the extent of Aden's population and liability to attack. He believed Aden would rapidly expand, after the British possession gave security and would become a "Mercantile Emporium." He deprecated, therefore, the reduction of vessels-of-war, for "Bedouins hold the appearance of fighting-vessels in great dread," and he added that "the solitary *Coote* had encouraged them to vacillate when they said: 'Are the

British so poor as to be able to send but one vessel, and she came only to talk? Why was she not sent before? Had they sent their men and vessels we should have given in, but till this happens they shall never have Aden.'" This is an apt illustration of the Hindustani proverb, "*Pahle lat, pichche bat,*" or a kick should precede discussion!

It will be recollected that Sultan Muhsin had offered to surrender Aden if a force appeared, and Haines' frequent denunciations of the Sultan's treachery are pressed too far when we consider that the acquisition of Aden was in itself a species of burglary! Haines had been, in his own words, "negotiating with men who had no respect for their God or for themselves, who never, even by mistake, tell the truth, and who would sell their nearest relations to effect their own aggrandisement." It is a strong, and, I think, an ungenerous indictment. Haines had forgotten his own experience at Sokotra, when that chieftain demurred to surrender his island. Tacitus records that the Britons of his day styled the Roman conquerors "raptores orbis." Have not we in these latter days donned their mantle?

The Sultan now played his last card, offering Haines the surrender of one half of Aden. This Haines refused to discuss, and a strict blockade was ordered.

On the 16th January, 1839, there arrived H.M.S. *Volage*, 28 guns, Capt. Smith; H.M.S. *Cruizer*, 16 guns; Lieut. Daniell, and 300 European with 400 native soldiers, under the command of Major Bailie.

Haines wrote peremptorily to the old Sultan Muhsin, then in Aden with 700 Bedouins, bidding him surrender Aden. The answer was evasive, and a secret message was brought that the Sultan was parleying to strengthen his position, and that 1,200 of the neighbouring tribesmen of the Fadli had been called in. So Haines decided on instant bombardment. He wrote to Capt. Smith that, having a perfect knowledge of the locality, he would be happy to give him every information, and be proud to accompany the commander of any vessel of the squadron

in taking up a position for the destruction of their strongest battery. He gave Capt. Smith a rough plan, laying the *Coote* close to the Seera battery, with the storming-troops in two divisions for use when the forts had been demolished. His plan was followed, with the exception that Capt. Smith substituted his own ship, the *Volage*, for the *Coote*, which would stand in the Hukat (Holkat) Bay. Haines took in the *Volage*, and he notes, "I feel proud to say he (Smith) was pleased with the position I gave her."

All was now ready. The troops were in the boats under cover of the ships and the reserves on board the *Coote* as the *Volage* stood in, and at 9.30 a.m. took up a position within 300 yards of the strongest battery. The *Cruizer*, ten minutes later, took up hers, as did the *Mahi* in Hukat Bay. The fire of the three vessels was tremendous and destructive. The battery and tower were soon demolished, but still the defenders of Seera lay under cover of the point, ready to fire on our crew as they pushed off. The *Mahi* schooner then weighed, and took up another position, flanking the Bedouins at fifty yards, and drew a very heavy fire; but her return fire soon drove the Arabs out, and they retreated, firing from every coign, until from the cross-fire of the *Volage*, *Cruizer*, *Coote*, and *Mahi*, together with the bomb-vessel, they feared to show themselves.

At 11.45 a.m. the troops left in two divisions, each party landing simultaneously, and met with little opposition. The Sultan's sons and the majority of the Bedouins fled the town. About ten minutes after landing the British flag was flying from the Sultan's Palace, and at 12.30 the boat of the *Mahi* and one from the *Volage* occupied Seera, capturing 139 Bedouins who were marched into the town. Haines remarks: "I could not but admire the splendid fire from the shipping and mortar-vessel, and the behaviour of the little *Mahi* drew forth the admiration of all. It is only wonderful how the prisoners lay so close under the rocks, or that any of them escaped. Nothing could have been more regular than the landing; the men were steady to a degree; they behaved with

CAPT. STAFFORD BETTESWORTH HAINES,
Indian Navy,
The Captor of Aden.

J. HADID, WITH THE "TURKISH WALL" TO LEFT,
the objective of Arab assaults after the capture of Aden.

courage, and stormed the place gallantly; but what is still more admirable, and a greater proof of their discipline, is that after landing neither male nor female was molested."

The British loss was very trivial until the unfortunate insurrection occurred of the prisoners from Seera. Our killed and wounded numbered 15, of whom 8 casualties occurred after Aden was taken. The loss of the enemy was severe; 139 were missing, besides many wounded who escaped inland. The enemy wounded received in Aden the medical attentions of Dr. Malcolmson, of the 24th Regt., and Haines gave these a few dollars for the support of their families. The inhabitants took shelter in the 'Aidrûs mosque, where the military placed a strong guard for their security. On the next day they were afraid to return to their homes until Haines reassured them, and stated he himself was taking up his quarters in the town. "It would be presumption on me," said Haines, "to point out peculiar instances of merit. I leave this to the S.N.O. and Military, merely stating that it is my firm conviction that British soldiers and sailors could not have behaved better."

Amongst the heroes of the fight the S.N.O. signalled out Lieut. Daniell, Midshipman Nisbett, I.N. (sorely wounded), Lieuts. Hamilton and Dobree. Also Mates Stewart and Rundle, the latter of whom *was the first to plant the British flag ashore*, and finally Lieut. Ayles, in charge of the Marines.

Thus fell Aden into British hands! The Honourable Court of Directors, writing in July, 1840, eulogised the conspicuous services rendered by Commander S. B. Haines and Lieut. E. W. S. Daniell, "which are well deserving some distinguished mark of our approbation. We have accordingly resolved to present Commander Haines with a sword of the value of 200 guineas, and Lieut. Daniell with one of 100 guineas—each with suitable inscriptions. Further, Mr. Midshipman Nisbett a donation of 500 Company's Crowns." *Rundle's* name merits immortality. "The British flag," an Arab once said to me, "repels calamity."

Haines' comment at a later date is pathetic:

> Thus fell Aden into the hands of the British. Yet though the first conquest of Her Majesty after her accession, it was scarcely noted—forgotten, doubtless, by the Government, owing to their anxiety for the success of the unfortunate campaign in Afghanistan, whose captors were noticed and rewarded; and for the time the storm of Ghuznee eclipsed that of Aden. How differently, however, has the first conquest (Aden) and the other terminated! Aden has thrice successfully repulsed united Arab endeavours to retake it; is now a peaceful settlement, and a valuable brilliant in the British Diadem, *requiring only a European War to develop its true value*, while Ghuznee, for which so many were rewarded, and a medal adorns the breast of many a soldier now in Aden, has been lost, retaken by the late General Sir William Nott, and destroyed.

Haines' prophecy of Aden's prospective value in a European War was realised in 1914, although the Admiralty had questioned its utility, and declined to contribute to the deepening of the harbour as an Imperial charge!

At its capture in 1839 Haines describes Aden as a miserable village containing perhaps 600 huts and a population chiefly of Jews. Three brass guns, 16 to 17 feet long, with the combined weight of 16 tons, carrying a ball of from 80 to 100 lbs., and cast in 901 A.H., were found and presented by the captors to Her Majesty. These were believed to have been deposited in Aden by the fleet of Suleiman the Magnificent in the early sixteenth century.

Haines expatiates on "Aden's vast possibilities *quâ* trade, which no other port in Arabia enjoys, and its rise must soon cause Mokha and the Red Sea ports to dwindle into insignificance." He uttered the pious belief that "through British influence the Light of the Gospel may be dispersed amongst the Children of Ishmael, and the blessings of civilisation spread over tracks hitherto beyond our reach." The Keith-Falconer Mission of Sheikh Othman may not have won many converts, but I am convinced that the lives of such men as the Hon. Ion Keith-Falconer, Doctors Alex. Paterson, John C.

Young, and Alex. MacRae—to enumerate a few of many medical missionaries—have proved an invaluable asset to our cause in S.W. Arabia. It is the leaven of British influence leavening the Semitic lump.

The eclipse of Mokha and other ports after 1839 may be ascribed chiefly to the emigrations consequent on the infamous rule of the Sherifs of Abu 'Arîsh, who then held the lowlands of the Yemen, coupled with the justice and probity of the Haines régime, and the declaration of Aden as a free port. Cholera, which raged along the littoral, was a further factor in Mokha's ruin, and, still later, the rise of Hodeida under the Turks completed her desolation. To-day, baulked in the direction of Hodeida, which is the natural outlet and port of Sana, the Imam Yahya of Sana is looking to a renovated Mokha. Its rebirth would still further stimulate trade—and, incidentally, the Port of Aden.

Stafford Bettesworth Haines became our first Political Agent at Aden on Rs.1,600/-. per mensem, which was enhanced later to Rs.2,000/-. He lived in the Crater in a house which is now the Arab Guest House, and in the hot weather on Ras Morbat, Steamer Point. Lieut. Jenkins was his first acting assistant, but was invalided, and succeeded in September, 1840, by Lieut. C. J. Cruttenden. All were of the Indian Navy, abolished, alas, in 1863. That service has produced many illustrious sons. They filled all the political posts during Aden's infancy, and were relieved by officers of the Indian Army in 1855 on the exit of Haines and Cruttenden. One is amazed at Haines' energy, integrity, and simpleness of life. To this day up-country Arabs refer to Aden folk as *'Ayâl Haines*, or "Children of Haines." Colonel F. M. Hunter, in his work on the Settlement of Aden, calls him "the pioneer of British interests and civilisation in S.W. Arabia," and Alexandre Dumas, in his *L'Arabie Heureuse*, makes one of his characters discourse on the triple H-men of these parts: "Le capitaine *Haines* à Aden, le consul *Hamilton* à Zanzibar, et le major *Hennell* resident à Bender-Bouchir, sont les principaux rouages de cette superbe mécanique appelée la puissance anglaise, et qui

domine dans la Mer Rouge, sur le golfe Persique, et sur les mers de l'Inde." There is in Aden no memorial or statue erected to Haines. Often during my régime of First Assistant to the Resident have I advocated a local *public* holiday, on 19th January, but the paper-basket of Government is a spacious one! It must be left to our merchant princes of Aden, whose coffers have been filled by the "Pax Britannica," to erect some mark of esteem of his rule.

Haines' crest was a demi-stag in front of a rising sun, with the motto *Deo non sorte*; an appropriate emblem for one whose trust was pre-eminently in God; who accepted his latter-day humiliation, all so ill-merited, with complete resignation; and whose eyes were ever turned to the rising sun of Arabia's future greatness which he predicted under the British ægis. Haines was one of England's great pioneers. He is now forgotten. He received no honours from his own Government. The Spanish Sovereign in 1853 would have bestowed on him the Cross of Knight Commander of the Royal Order of Isabel la Catolica for services rendered to a shipwrecked crew, but its bestowal was opposed by the British Government. Haines committed the mistakes of a pioneer, and yet, to adapt Johnson's epitaph on Goldsmith, but little of what he handled did he fail to grace. It is on Haines' foundations that his successors have built, and his shade, if ever he returns to his old haunts, may rightly exclaim, *Exegi monumentum aëre perennius*. Full details of the political labours of Haines are not feasible in the compass of this book, which has, moreover, a wider scope. I shall confine myself to relating the salient points of his policy. If in places, while anxious to retain Haines' own homely phrases, I become prolix, it is because these phrases reveal the man as he was, and are, oftentime, more illuminating than his acts.

Haines inaugurated our rule in Aden. He did not live long enough to see the consummation of his labours. The first-fruits of his labours he was indeed privileged to see in an Aden awaked as one out of sleep.

*Je l'ai planté, je l'ai vu naître.*

## CHAPTER THREE

### HAINES' RÉGIME FOR FIFTEEN YEARS. BRITISH POLICY WITH ARABS OF THE INTERIOR

HAINES' first object after taking Aden was to keep the tribes of the interior quiet until temporary defences had been thrown up. In this he was successful. The field-works and redans with ditch were completed by Lieut. Western of the Engineers on the line of the old "Arab Wall" (darb el Hureibi), in the hills to the left of one entering by the Main Pass.

On the 2nd February, 1839, a Treaty of Friendship was signed between the English and the Abdalis, and supplanted by a bond of 18th June, 1839, which was ratified by the Governor-General of India in the same year. An annual payment to him of 6,500 dollars was fixed, and the claim for stipends payable by him, *quâ* blackmail, to four prominent up-country tribesmen was shouldered by the British Government. This is important as being the *genesis* of the vast system of stipends thereafter given by us to secure tranquillity on the trade-routes. This entailed the entertainment of Arab guests, who up to this day make periodical visits to Aden to show *sidâka* (friendship)—that is, to receive largesse. In the early years of Haines' régime he received constant orders from Government urging the strictest economy, although his monthly payments were short of Rs.200/-. We now give Rs.78,000/- annually in stipends, and many thousands in presents!

Alexandre Dumas makes the Sherif Husein of Abu 'Arîsh in 1843 to criticise the English habits of disbursements in these words: "Les Anglais dépensent des sommes folles pour s'allier les Arabes. Ils y trouvent de temps en temps un traître, jamais un ami." This last clause was once true, but by tact and personal intercourse Haines lived to make friendships, and largely succeeded.

Before, however, the year was out, in November, some 5,000 Arabs, instigated by Sultan Muhsin of Lahej, attacked our position at the "Turkish Wall," in the Isthmus Position, but retreated with a loss of 200 casualties. A few days later the Sultan wrote as an injured man: "You have thrown dust in our eyes. By kind words and gifts you have blinded us, the while you were throwing up forts to destroy us! Ah, commander, pity me, for it is the fault of my tribe. Forgive me, and restore my pension."

On the 21st May, 1840, a second attack was delivered, again unsuccessfully. Haines now closed the road to Aden, to bluff the Sultan into believing that he was temporarily independent of supplies from the interior. This thoroughly exasperated the Sultan, who on the 15th July, 1840, launched his third attack. A block-boat and a gun-boat from the direction of Slave Island, at 100 yards from our front line, completely demoralised the attackers. The Arab casualties were 300 and ours were nil. The Fadli Sultan, whose headquarters were at the port of Shukra, to the East of Aden, had abetted the Abdali Sultan, and Haines bombarded his castle. This mode of retaliation was so effective, wrote Haines, that he persevered until, in 1843, Sultan Muhsin sued for peace; and in February, 1843, a new treaty was concluded in Aden. The question of the restoration of the stipend was postponed. A further bond was entered into on 20th February, 1844, and a monthly salary of 541 German crowns allowed, so long as the Sultan should adhere to the bond of 1843. Neither of these last two bonds was ratified by Government. Sultan Muhsin died in November, 1847; his son and successor Ahmed died in January, 1849; and then, with his brother Ali Muhsin, a new treaty was signed on the 7th March following. This treaty was ratified, and is now accepted as the sole extant and official treaty. Its purpose is to secure Commercial Advantages with Friendly Intercourse, Good Will, and Lasting Peace. There is nothing in it of a "Protective" nature. The bond of June, 1839, it is true, provided "in case of attacks upon Lahej or the

Abdali tribe, or upon Aden or the British troops, the Sultan and the British shall make a common cause," but this earlier bond is *literally* null and void. Curiously enough, in the 1882 agreement for the purchase of Sheikh Othman it is stated in the last article that the territories of the Sultan, his heirs and successors, *shall remain under British Protection as heretofore.*

In the *pourparlers* before the 1849 treaty the Court of Directors were strongly averse to affording protection. " We must decline to enter into an agreement of protection as solicited by the Sultan." The hostile Sultan Muhsin had died, and his son Ahmed was a man of very different stamp, who, sensible of the advantages of friendly relations with the British, had done his utmost to cultivate them. Even his natural request for a residence in Aden was considered " quite inadvisable." To this day the Sultan of Lahej has no Aden residence, and on his occasional political visits is obliged to hire a house. A small outlay of courtesy would ensure large returns.

Reverting to the abrogation of the treaties, it is the spirit which should be observed no less than the letter. It is clear that the earlier treaties have not been abrogated in spirit as ruled by the Bombay Government. In 1910 the bone of contention was Article 5 of the Treaty of 11th November, 1843, where perfect reciprocity was observable in the matter of extradition of British and Abdali subjects to their respective Courts, whereas in the corresponding Article 3 of the 1849 and official Treaty there is no mention of the Sultan's subjects being handed over to him. Considering the latter-day friendship of the House of Lahej, and its supreme usefulness to our cause behind Aden, I have often during my tenure of office made special cases of this kind. Exceptions test the rule. Governments lay down broad principles, but local officers, who feel the local pulse, must often act on their own responsibility, and a certain latitude is their due.

In the infancy of his régime Haines would often, when asked a favour, shelter behind " superior authority." This is " playing for safety." Haines would have scored even more successes in his early days had he omitted

these words—referred the important matter to Government, if necessary, and on receipt of orders have given the decision as his own. Let an Arab, whose intellect lies proverbially in his eyes, once note the slightest curtailment of your power, and your influence over him is straightway "on the toboggan." I found this so during my three years' stay in the Hinterland. It is even advisable at times not to consult Government, but to act on your own initiative provided you adhere to a general broad-based principle once enunciated by "superior authority." The local officer sees things in their proper setting and local colour. I was never a believer in the Indian adage of blind adhesion to authority comprised in the Indian saw, "*Panch kahe billi to billi hi sahih*"—or, "The animal is verily a cat, because the Panch says it is!" Sanely regarded, the authority formulating the principle, and the officer who applies it, are one and the same, and both together constitute the Government. The Sultans of Lahej have said to me, "You are the Government; we look to you," and in turn I have ever associated the Lahej House with Aden, and included him in the category of Government. You thus make your man your very own. Lahej's loyalty in the war and before was not, believe me, solely actuated by selfish motives of self-preservation, but was due to his appreciation of the *Pax Britannica*. He considered himself part and parcel of the British system. Contrast the Abdali House of to-day with his earlier forbears, and the British influence attained is apparent. We have realised the words of Lao-Tzū—"Development without domination."

I here record the death of that brilliant young officer, Lieut. John Western, of the Bombay Engineers. His grave stands conspicuous in Aden's first cemetery, situated in the Crater, in the low ground between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican *Christ Church*. It was erected by officers of the garrison, to all of whom "he was endeared by the manly simplicity of his character and genuine kindness of heart." He landed with the force at the capture of Aden by storm on 19th January, 1839, and, after erecting the first defences at

the Turkish Wall, and commencing the fortifications on the heights, died from the effects of exposure to the sun on the 4th of June, 1840, aged 27 years."

The population of Aden, which was 600 in 1839, had risen in September of that year, exclusive of troops, to 2,855, and of these 537 were females. In 1842 it reached 25,000, thus proving the growing security under British rule.

The wisdom, or otherwise, of *Divide and Rule* has often been discussed. Limited as were his military resources, and the reinforcements he asked for to punish Lahej being vetoed or delayed, Haines felt he had no option but to pit one tribe against another, and he advocated " setting other and hostile tribes against the marauders without calling in British Bayonets." Money is the sinews of war, and Haines believed in its charm and potency.

After their union to pinprick the Aden garrison, both the Abdali and the Fadli Sultans had forfeited their stipends, and it was essential to separate their interests. Haines kept the Fadli tribe busy by intriguing with their neighbours the 'Aulakis and Yâfa'is. He proposed a troop of horse of twenty Abdali tribesmen under an Arab leader, in order, as he wisely said, to identify ourselves with the inhabitants. This measure was approved by Government. These men were afterwards relieved by the " Poona Auxiliary Horse," the forerunners of the present Aden Troop, who are enlisted in India.

It is sad to note the wobbling policy of the Government of Bombay, who in 1846, with seven years' experience of Aden, and after having proscribed most of the measures advocated by Haines, were ready to approve of dissensions between the Abdali and Fadli, for " though loss of life is to be regretted, still the occurrence, it is hoped, will prove beneficial to British interests at Aden by widening the breach between the respective tribes." The Court of Directors, it must be admitted, had initiated a policy of non-intervention, tempered, when outraged feelings demanded a relaxation of the rule, with half-hearted measures of chastisement.

In 1839 the Egyptian forces in the Yemen, under

Ibrahim Pasha, were pressing south to acquire the Hujariya district to north-west of Aden—a fertile tract from which coffee worth 60,000 dollars was annually exported. Haines advised Government to check the Pasha's advance, for the Egyptians, if they conquered the Yemen, would, he thought, strike a blow at our Indian trade. The Sheikh of Hujariya, writing from his capital of Dhubhân, offered to resist the invasion, for he preferred to send his produce to Aden rather than to Mokha. Haines believed Mokha would thereupon decline, and continue to decline, so long as the British flag was flying in Aden.

An Arab Sheikh within our sphere asked me in 1911 for an English flag. "The flag," he said, "repels calamity" —*al bandîra tadfa' bala*—a pretty conceit of our reputation. I gave him a flag, of course; it was not strictly permissible, but "those who play by rule will never be more than tolerable players," said R. L. S.

Palmerston in 1839 asked Muhammad Ali, the Pasha of Egypt, to withdraw his troops from the Yemen, and remarked that the Government of India need not be restrained in their dealings with the chiefs in the interior, nor, indeed, with the "Sultan of Sana," by any consideration of Muhammad Ali, who had no right whatever over countries governed by those Arab rulers! Would that Pam had been Foreign Secretary when in 1904–1907 I was in Dala!

In late 1838 the said Pasha had been told of the British desire for Aden, and had consented to respect their wishes. The Pasha was amongst those to whom Haines announced his capture of Aden and its inclusion under the British flag. He replied with characteristic generosity: "You have taken in one day what I for years have vainly coveted—the *Eye of the Yemen.*"

The Court of Directors, who in their despatches familiarly subscribed themselves "Your loving Friends," were highly eulogistic of the conduct of the Aden garrison in repelling the Arab attacks, but expressed the hope that nothing would be done by soldiers or others to provoke aggression. They approved of Haines' exertions to

strengthen his positions. Haines had urged a rapid descent on, and occupation of, the Abdali capital of Lahej, but the Directors vetoed an enterprise of such magnitude. They said, very truly, that the Arab hostility was natural. They believed it was utterly at variance with the purposes of the Pasha of Egypt to encourage the tribes in their annoyance of our troops, though they admitted, as probably well-founded, Haines' suspicion that the Egyptian local authorities were guilty of hostile practices towards British interests. When the attacks continued, the Directors gave more credence to Haines, and wrote they would welcome plans, backed by the Indian Government, either to conciliate the hostile chieftains or to strike such terror into them as would prevent a recurrence of their incursions. Finally, these good people understood that Muhammad Ali did not conceal his satisfaction at the affairs at Mokha, where the British flag was insulted.

At length reinforcements arrived from Bombay, when the Abdali Sultan Muhsin felt great alarm, fearing a British advance. Many inland chiefs came in "to visit the flag," and the powerful Zeidi clansmen of the Dhu Muhammad and Dhu Husein, who are styled the "Two Wings" of the Imam of Sana, wrote offering Haines their territories. Even the Imam himself from the far interior demanded the British intentions. To all and sundry, Haines sympathetically replied we had no aims of self-aggrandisement. Haines was an optimist. He knew the Arab character, and that reforms required time and patience. "It cannot be expected that our turbulent neighbours, who have regarded robbery and plunder as no great crime, will at once be convinced of their errors, or of the advantages of leading a quiet life; nor can they as yet estimate British generosity and kindness in its true light." He of course meant in the *British light*! "Time will teach them to esteem us, or at all events to regard us as a people who have been the means of improving their minds and adding to their comforts; and as the dread of our further encroachments decreases, I hope their respect will increase."

Haines ruled with the heart. He was no Arabist. He knew nothing of the Koran. An honest and bluff sailor, he believed he might abolish the blood-feud, which the Prophet himself recognised as an integral part of the Arab's life. "We have formed you, O men," says Allah, "into tribes and clans that you may get to know each other"—not to *unite*, be it noted, but to practise a unity in diversity.

The soldier-administrator General John Jacob of Jacobabad would have approved of Haines. One of his maxims was: "It is moral more than physical force which is required to control predatory tribes! Both are necessary, but the latter is so chiefly, to enable us to apply the other"; so thought Haines. I like, too, John Jacob's: "While studying the character of the natives, and becoming completely acquainted with their habits, feelings, and modes of expression, *endeavour by all means to remain a thoroughly English gentleman. All our power rests on this.*" Such was Haines. During the Great War, a Moslem of high social standing passing through Aden, on the staff of an Indian Prince, said to me, anent the somewhat mixed quality of the drafts we sent to the Indian Army: "Why do you not send us out Sahibs?" Preserve the breed, and the Indian Army will be loyal to the core.

It is refreshing to note Haines' love of the British soldier. "They are by far the greater favourites with the population than are the natives. They command more respect, and not a dispute of any kind has occurred between them and the people; whereas, with the Hindi *Seapoys*, continued differences arise, particularly on the subject of water."

When in 1904 I was in the Hinterland, my experience was similar. Tommy Atkins was my prime political asset. I owed everything to the British soldier, and would give the palm to the men and officers of that fine and well-disciplined 3rd Battalion of the Rifle Brigade.

Haines' "Fabian tactics" disconcerted the belligerent Arabs. They attributed this to lack of courage or

cold-heartedness, so contrary to their own maxim of revenging every petty insult. The Aden folk were settling down, as they saw the futility of Arab attacks on the garrison. Haines felt like a caged lion, and longed to chastise the succession of annoyances. " These mild measures will be detrimental, and be wrongly construed by tribes along the whole coast of Arabia," he wrote.

Haines employed the Jews as informants. Their information was written to their co-religionists in Aden in Hebrew, and was undecipherable by Arabs. The wealthy firm in Aden to-day of Menahim Messa was represented in Haines' days by one Menahim Misha, who served in the humble capacity of accountant in the Customs. The only liquor distilled in Aden then, as now, was in the hands of Jewry. It was made from dates and raisins. Wholesome, but weak, it was disliked by the troops. Even the Jewish working-classes were permitted but one daily glass, and not a case occurred of intoxication amongst Jews. Haines remarks: " I do not think a soldier would drink it, for it would take many bottles to intoxicate him. I have never witnessed so little mischief where so many soldiers and sailors meet as in Aden. The 1st European Regiment has behaved in a way that redounds to its credit, for since Aden was captured no complaint by Mahomedan, Somauli, Banian, or Jew has been received of oppression or misbehaviour."

In early 1840 Haines once more comments on Muhammad Ali's career. The Bedouins regarded his lieutenent, Ibrahim Pasha, as an all-victorious conqueror. Since 1835 Haines had noted the Pasha's craving for Aden. Letters passed frequently between Lahej and Ibrahim Pasha at Hodeida. Muhammad Ali had sent an Embassy to the Imam of Sana, and it was currently reported that the Imam had agreed to deliver up Sana and the adjacent country, if he might retain his houses and gardens, and also his influence over the Zeidi tribesmen. It was stipulated he should receive a large annual salary from Egypt. He was asked to drive the English from Aden, and in consideration of such service was to hold possession of Ta'izz and interior towns. The Imam,

however, replied it was impossible to oppose the British, nor was he so inclined.

Egyptian soldiers were deserting to Aden, and Ibrahim Pasha addressed the British Agent at Mokha for their extradition. Haines did not reply, but once more felt he was not justified in complying "without superior authority"! There were many Egyptians in Aden when the place was captured, and all were free to enter, and none had committed any breach of British laws. In January, 1847, several British naval ratings from H.C. brigantine *Tigris* deserted to Mokha, and in 1848 two Europeans of the Madras Artillery hied off to the Sherif Husein at Mokha. When asked for their extradition, the Sherif replied they had become Moslems. The naval officer conducting our *pourparlers* demanded them "as British subjects, deserters, and thieves"; that they had become "Musselman" merely to meet with the Sherif's protection, and it was the latter's duty to hand them over. The Sherif naturally refused, and was certainly conforming to ordinary practice.

In November, 1849, the Governor in Council sanctioned a paltry sum of Rs.20/- to be paid by Haines to Arabs for the apprehension of three deserters from the 2nd European Light Infantry. Haines commented on the dislike of soldiers for Aden. Many had tried to escape to Mokha, hoping to find passage to America. "They only smoke and sleep. Officers should see to it that games are introduced, e.g. cricket, theatrical representations, throwing the ball, rackets, etc." How very different all is now! The soldiers not alone play daily, but have taught the Arabs and Somalis to do so. Games all over the world are one of the best methods of bringing together the West and the East. I should very much like to send home a team of Somali "soccer" players; and the men of the Arab 1st Yemen Infantry would give a fair game to teams of the League's Third Division.

In July, 1840, the French were casting their eyes towards the coast of Africa opposite Aden, and advices from home to Haines told him to take immediate steps quietly to secure commercial and political preference for

Great Britain in Zeila and Berbera, as any foreign settlement on that Somali coast would be highly detrimental to British interests, and they add: "How that object is to be secured you, from your local experience, will be able to judge, and we have so much confidence in your zeal and ability, that we willingly give you entire discretion as to measures to be adopted, except that we desire no compulsion be resorted to."

Haines did not advise any intervention in Zeila, as such would offend the Imam of Sana, who once held Zeila in appanage. As the Imam was then seeking to approach us, such action might cause umbrage. Towards the end of the year the Court of Directors entirely approved of all Haines' policy in this quarter. When all through the records one reads of the implicit confidence reposed in Haines, it comes as a shock to see how completely he was tossed aside in 1854 like a squeezed orange. How are the mighty fallen! It was inexplicable—and un-English! For an account of the tragedy I would refer the reader to Low's *History of the Indian Navy* and Allen's *Indian Mail* of August, 1860.

In 1849 the French Consul at Massawa wrote to his Minister: "Tôt ou tard, on doit l'espérer, il se construira un canal á Suez, et alors sans contredit la Mer Rouge, sera un des points du monde les plus importants. Dans cette prévision, vous voudrez à coup sûr, y assurer à notre pays un établissement commercial et politique convenablement situé." The French Government, however, were too busy with home and foreign affairs to act.

The Egyptians were preparing in 1840 to evacuate the Yemen, and Haines sent a ship to safeguard British interests. He then learnt that Ibrahim Pasha had given over the seaports of the Yemen to Sherif Husein bin Ali bin Haidar for an annual tribute of 90,000 German crowns. The Imam of Sana, who was the rightful residuary legatee, was too straitened financially to come forward, and the struggle for preference was between Sheikh Ali Humeida of Bâjil (the family is still supreme in Bâjil and afforded me the greatest assistance when I was detained there in 1919) and the upstart Sherif Husein,

who was supported solely by his sanctity as one of the Ashrâf of Abu 'Arîsh.

Ibrahim Pasha had originally agreed to hand over the Tihama ports to Muhammad bin 'Aun, the Sherif of Mecca, but Husein of Abu 'Arîsh disputed possession, and, in alliance with the Beni 'Asîr of Abha and districts, seized Hodeida. Whereupon the Pasha entered into agreement with Husein as the strongest man. This Sherif was in 1836 a writer to the Egyptian Governor at Mokha. His rise was largely due to his energy and astuteness.

The Egyptian evacuation greatly unsettled the popular mind, just as in 1918 the surrender to us of the Turkish garrisons, in terms of the armistice, left the whole countryside in a state of unrest and expectancy. The various religious parties are still striving for supremacy.

Finding his legs, Sherif Husein called for the submission of the Imam, his one-time master, and wrote an insolent letter to the Government of Bombay ordering the Government to give up Aden. His cruelties were refined. He confined merchants, who secured their release by payment of heavy fines. He hired carpenters who built an immense grain-chest, and they were invited to step inside to gauge its storage-capacity. After twenty-five had entered the lid was closed and the price of freedom was the forfeiture of their possessions. One who refused compliance was taken out dead.

He had a wild scheme by which the Straits of Bab al Mandab were to be blocked. Other nations would protest and declare war. A *Jihad* would ensue, and to this the fanatical Husein looked forward. Husein's hand was against, not only the infidels in Aden, but his fellow-Arabs also. The then Imam of Sana had recognised how inimical to Islam was Husein's quarrel with himself. "If only the Arabs were united," he said, "what power their unison would exercise!" Arabs well repeat this formula to-day! The Imam predicted that Husein's animosity towards the British in Aden would be the ruin of Arabia. Husein's fanaticism, he said, was poverty; tolerance alone could procure wealth.

Husein was in communication with Sultan Muhsin of Lahej. He cut down the British flag at Mokha and took shelter under the Porte, alleging he was a subject of Turkey. Our Embassy at Constantinople objected, and a Turkish Commissioner, Ashraf Bey, was sent to remove Sherif Husein. Husein naïvely referred him to the hereditary rights of the Imams of Sana! The Bey was heavily bribed by Husein and allowed another three years' enjoyment of his possessions. In 1847 he returned and presented Husein with Turkish insignia, publicly recognising his hold of the ports on payment of 70,000 crowns per annum.

Our Embassy at Constantinople then wrote to Palmerston to say the Grand Vizier was profoundly satisfied at the Yemen's submission to the Porte; that Sherif Husein, the principal Sheikh of the Yemen (*sic*), had been raised to the dignity of Pasha, and that an officer of the Porte would in future reside at Mokha to superintend conjointly the affairs of the province. It was the line of least resistance on which the Porte, in its weakness, had embarked. The Turks only discovered in 1911 the effects of their policy of setting up two rulers in the Yemen. It was then too late to efface the Idrisi ruler of Sabia, who had from 1907–1911 established himself in the Yemen lowlands, and who allied himself with the Italians in the 1911 war. Our Foreign Office of that earlier time had backed the Turks to oust the Egyptians of Muhammad Ali's régime, and then, with eyes bandaged, had in 1848 connived at the substitution of the Pasha by another and Arab rival to Sana. In 1923 the same policy is being relentlessly pursued!

In 1848 the Imam descended, and after a series of skirmishes captured Husein, who was given over a prisoner into the hands of the Dhû Muhammad and Husein tribes. The Imam's terms for Husein's release were the payment of 20,000 crowns and the surrender of the seaports. The Sherif was released by bribing his captors.

Fortune favoured, now the Imam, and now the Sherif, who recaptured Zebid and besieged Mokha, which was held by an Imamic Governor. The place was

treacherously surrendered to Husein after a two months' siege. Finally, in 1849 the Turks sent a fleet and land-force against Hodeida. Sherif Husein signed away all the seaports to them, and retired to his capital of Abu 'Arîsh. He went in 1851 to lay his complaints before the Porte, and was poisoned, it is said, at Jedda. Poison inserted in the coffee dregs is a well-established device in Arabia for the riddance of an enemy, and in 1850 Sabri Pasha, then Turkish Governor of the Yemen, died suddenly at Bâjil, while a guest of Sheikh Ali Humeida. The Arabs ironically said "the coffee disagreed with him"!

Haines' fencings with the Imam of Sana open out some very interesting phases of policy which have peculiar value to-day, when we are set to pacify conflicting Arab interests after the departure of the Turks.

In 1840 the Imam sent his nephew to Haines to conclude a Treaty of Peace and Commerce and to complain of the Pasha's gift of the ports to Sherif Husein in the face of the fact that the towns of Zebid, Hodeida, and Mokha were his own. Haines held no equivocal views on the Imam's rights, and wrote "if once a safe communication for commerce be opened with Sana, Aden would flourish." The Government of India directed Haines to receive the envoy with becoming civility, but he should be careful not to involve Government in pledges connected with that chieftain's claims in Mokha; and with reference to Sherif Husein's unfriendly acts, "it might hereafter be politic to encourage the support of the Imam's pretensions." Nothing, however, was done when opportunity offered, and this was the thin end of the wedge driven in to break a rapprochement betwixt ourselves and the rightful ruler of the Yemen. The consequences of our inaction are felt to-day in the Yemen. Had we been on friendly terms with the House of Sana the course of the Great War had been far different, and we should have no jarring sects warring for Arab supremacy over Turkish remains.

Again, in 1841, a mission from the Imam arrived in Aden to enlist British co-operation by sea to enable the other to wrest the Tihama ports from Sherif Husein,

but our principle of non-intervention in Arab politics discouraged the Imam and left him inactive. In July of 1841 the Imam sent another mission. His envoy was empowered to accept any conditions sought by Haines, and even Zeila, on the Somali coast, was to be ceded as the price of British co-operation. Haines fell back upon our principle of strict neutrality. Yet again, in 1843, did the Imam despatch an envoy to ask that a British officer be posted at Sana as adviser—a glorious opportunity for subtly extending British influence—but the Government declined to interfere.

In January, 1848, the Imam wrote to Haines asking if England meant quietly to submit to Husein's insult to her flag. He wanted Aden's co-operation against Husein, who had usurped country that was his ancestor's. Knowing that Hodeida and Mokha would be of little use to him were the Indian trade cut off, the Imam turned to the British Government as the nation best able to assist him by establishing a "commercial treaty," and should the Turks compel him to resign Mokha and Hodeida, he foresaw the practicability of ruining their prospects by diverting inland caravans, and making Aden the sole inlet and outlet for coffee and the general Indian trade. Haines believed the Imam could arrange this. It was possible, thought Haines, that the death of the Lahej Sultan had aroused the Imam's cupidity, and that one object that chief had in view in securing a treaty with the British was the acquisition of territory about Lahej. The Imam Muhammad bin Yahya al Mutawakkil[1] was superior to his predecessors, many of whom had been debauchees. Feared by his relations on account of his superior attainments, he had been expelled from Sana and had been seen by Haines in 1836 in Mokha, a wandering beggar, carrying a single mat as shelter from the sun, and living on voluntary alms. By one of those changes so common in Arabia he found himself Imam of Sana. His conduct fully bore out the popular choice. Having restored tranquillity to the hill country, he turned his attention to the seaports, to which the Porte had just asserted

[1] This was, I think, Muhammad bin Abdallah, rather.

its sovereign rights. Haines began to suspect the Imam's importunity. He scented the alarm of the tribes on the road to Aden if a commercial treaty was concluded with the Imam, for he believed the Shâfa'i tribesmen of the plains would not brook the yoke of the Zeidi overlord. Perhaps Haines overlooked the fact that in all those territories once his the Zeidi ruler had wisely in Shâfa'i tracts nominated governors of the Shâfa'i persuasion. It would be as unreasonable if anyone to-day objected to our Protestant King's rule over Catholic subjects. We are too prone to accentuate the divergence between the two sects in Arabia. It is rather a geographical separation. The line of cleavage between Sunni and Shi'ite is more sharply defined in India, and this is due, perhaps, to the introduction of Islam at a much later date. The convert from Hinduism is a greater stickler for religious etiquette. In the Yemen both sectaries will pray in one mosque; in India each sect has his own; and while for a season, when under the influence of political distemper, Sunnis recently opened their pulpits to Hindu orators, their action was adversely criticised by their Shi'ite co-religionists. The Sunnis and Shi'ites of the Yemen will intermarry, and I have not seldom seen a man change his religious persuasion as readily as his cloak. Of such an one the Arabs say, *hûa yatalabbas bil Islâm*—or, he dons Islam as a cloak.

Haines thought it detrimental to British interests to have the Zeidi Imam too near to Aden, and he advocated a line being drawn so as to restrict Zeidi advance southwards of Kataba. This was the southern limit fixed by the Anglo-Turkish Commissioners of the Border in 1902–1904. Haines suggested that his assistant, Lieut. Cruttenden, should be deputed to meet the Imam in Sana. He used words so often since echoed by Aden, that "although French and German travellers are annually found in the interior of the Yemen, with Jews from Vienna and Poland, travelling avowedly for information, still, of the British nation, who holds one of their most important seaports, the people are all ignorant." How true a comment! An Arab once said to me that Governors of

old-time Aden would tour extensively and show themselves to the tribesmen, and Arabs did not understand why British Governors kept so aloof in the background of Aden. Our inaction gave the Imam to think. He suspected our weakness.

He wrote to Haines that he had collected large forces and would come down to Lahej. He asked for funds with which to settle all the neighbourhood in the vicinity of Aden. He suggested we should pay to him the stipends we paid to various chieftains, so that on him should fall the task, by the strength of Allah, of keeping the peace of the country. "This is written," said he, "in a spirit of friendliness. If you will not accede to my request, this will be my last friendly letter, and enmity will succeed. This is fair warning. Let me assure you that the money I ask is a mere loan to be refunded" Pure Arab bluff, but disconcerting in those early days of British experience. To-day, with the Turks gone, I can conceive of no saner programme than to hand over to the Imam the many Arab chieftains whom this Irredentist Arab ruler would fain re-annex to Arab rule.

Haines' reply was characteristic and concise. "I will send your letter by next steamer to the Bombay Government. I am but an agent, and can give no further reply to your Highness, but should *superior authority* command me to do otherwise, I obey."

Various fanatical upstarts appeared in Haines' time to disturb the peace and add to his difficulties. There was the Fakih Sa'id of 1840, who lived at Danwa, four days' journey from Aden. He was self-styled *Al Mahdi al Muntaḍhar*,[1] or the "Expected Regenerator," which was the legend inscribed on his coinage, while on the reverse side were the words "Sultan of the Land and Sea."

Originally a vendor of the *Kat* leaf, he now won the devotion of thousands by promising the abolition of taxes and the recovery of the Yemen from the hands of the infidels. He sanctioned universal plunder, and

[1] This is the style of the twelfth Imam of the Dodekite Imamate. He is the Mahdi that shall re-appear as No. 13

encouraged believers by promising invulnerability to sword or bullet. The Fakih wrote to Sherif Husein of Mokha ordering the surrender of Mokha, Hodeida, and Zebid. Husein replied that a Moslem should certainly obey mandates, but asked the fanatic to prove his *bona fides* by first recovering Aden. The Sultan of Lahej sent ten of his chieftains to escort the Pretender to Lahej, and many of the tribes to E. and N.E. of Aden promised him allegiance in a religious war. Haines felt secure behind his defences, and confident in his ability to defeat any combination.

The Imam's forces opposed this usurper, whose followers deserted daily. The latter had deputed the stalwart Bâkil tribesmen of the Dhu Muhammad and Husein to storm the Imam's headquarters, but those mercenaries went over to their rightful liege, and slaughtered 130 of the Fakih's followers. The Imam then advanced to Danwa, and after a hard fight the Pretender was defeated and hundreds of his men massacred in the mosque precincts. The Imam again wrote to Haines offering him friendship, but Haines merely strengthened his defences. His strength at the "Turkish Wall" totalled 546 men, of whom only 163 were British soldiers.

Another *trouble-fête* was Saiyid Isma'îl, who came down from Mecca in 1846. His forces were detached from Mokha and joined by tribesmen of the Bâkil, Beni 'Asîr, and Yâm. The Sultan of Lahej tendered his allegiance. Fadli, Haushabi, and 'Akrabi tribesmen joined him. He made his plans, saying that at the psychological moment he would capture Aden in half an hour. A thousand people left Aden believing that the British could not withstand this superhuman Moslem leader. Supplies to Aden were cut off. Repeated attacks on our positions were repulsed with enemy's loss. The Saiyid wrote a bombastic letter to Haines stating his divine mission; that Haines could never withstand his armies, but he disliked recourse to harsh measures until his polite offers had been refused. "If you listen to my advice and submit yourselves honourably to me, you will be doubly blessed by Allah. You and I will at once become

of one creed, where so long our religions have kept us apart. What is mine will be yours and yours mine. Take my advice or I shall be blameless of consequences. God is on my side. I have not come from afar to amass wealth. I seek only Allah's glory. My trust is in Him."

Some thirty Somalis arriving with this letter were confined as spies, and then sent across by sea to their homes. A further attack was repulsed by the guns at the "Turkish Wall," assisted by the guns of the *Sesostris*, under Lieut. Hamilton, who, taking advantage of the tide, pulled close to the shore and raked the Khor Maksar Bridge, forcing the Bedouins to fall back across the swampy ground. The Saiyid's impotence caused the tribesmen's allegiance to waver, and the holy man decamped to the Fadli country, under the pretence of celebrating the Ramadan fast. He had appealed to the Imam of Sana for help, who in reply wondered that a man possessed of supernatural powers should deign to rely so entirely on earthly assistance!

The Court of Directors, while approving of Haines' vigilance in expectation of an attack, would on no account sanction a scheme for punishing his neighbours, the allies of Isma'îl, saying that "the permanent hostile feeling that must follow would more than counterbalance the temporary advantage to be derived from the terror it might occasion."

Yet again, in 1851, a strange Sherif of the Yemen appeared in the Subehi country near Aden. His name was unknown; his eyes gleamed luminously. He could so exorcise muskets as to prevent their discharge. Even a weapon hurled would recoil on the hurler! Gates burst open to his approach. The new Sultan Ali of Lahej asked help of Haines, who ridiculed the Pretender's boasted powers, and told the Sultan to read his Koran, where he would find that even the Prophet claimed no such powers. He reminded him of the end of the Fakih Sa'id. The wonder-working fanatic returned home and was forgotten.

In 1850 and 1851 some British seamen were killed and

Capt. Milne was treacherously murdered, the latter by one of the Saiyid community of the village of Al Waht, hard by Aden. Haines demanded the surrender of the murderers, who would shift their residence from place to place in the territories of the various chieftains about Aden. He threatened dire vengeance if his requests were disregarded. When pressed for surrender, the chieftain would push the culprit across his border into another jurisdiction. Finally, to stay the importunities of Haines, the Fadli Chief reported one culprit's death by poison, and addressing a fellow-chief, he trusted that the Saiyid's soul might rest in peace in the blessed Gardens of Allah!

The 'Akrabi Sheikh of Bir Ahmed, which lies across the bay to the north of Aden, was another harbourer of criminals. Haines urged the destruction of his castles, which again were *points d'appui* of all Fadli machinations against Aden, but Government remained obdurate. Haines could only stop the Fadli's stipend and blockade his ports, and he stopped supplies by sea to Bir Ahmed. He realised the unwisdom of mulcting a chieftain, and foresaw an additional incitement to plunder the trade-routes. It was only after much correspondence that India sanctioned the putting forth of the British power for the chastisement of the Fadli Sultan. The Government wrote truculently that Haines should not be content with levelling a town or two near the coast, but should carry fire and sword into the country, and inflict the utmost severity of punishment upon their persons and property, *consistent with humanity*. Haines was left to consult his discretion as to methods used, but Government was precise that, as no reinforcements could be sent for at least two months, the expedition must be made solely with the existing garrison at Aden.

So far so good, until the Home Committee wrote deprecating, except under circumstances of extreme necessity, any advance into the interior, and expressed the pious wish that the Fadli chief might be tamed without recourse to military operations! Nothing, therefore, was done and although this despatch arrived in time to prevent

the movement of troops, yet Haines' letter had been issued, threatening dire punishment if surrender of the murderer was not made. So the distracted Haines had the mortification of knowing that the enemy regarded him as an idle boaster—one impotent to enforce his threats. All this vacillation and disagreement between authorities was a menace to British prestige. Haines' mistake was insisting on what to an Arab is a moral impossibility, namely, the surrender of a criminal who has sought asylum with him. A succeeding Resident, General Coghlan, wrote in 1863: "Though proverbially inconsistent themselves, and frequently indulging in threats they have no power to fulfil, the Arabs appreciate consistency in others, and the want of it which so unhappily characterised Capt. Haines' administration, though not the fault of that officer, has had the most prejudicial effect in lowering our prestige in Arab administration."

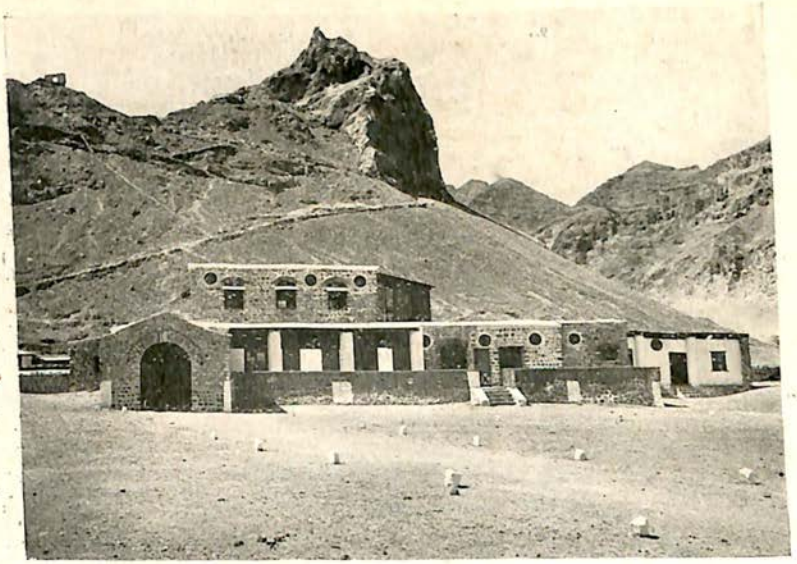
Unhappily we pursued the same tactics in 1904, when that distinguished officer, Capt. Warneford, was murdered at Am Riga', in the Subehi country. Aden demanded the person of the murderer, offering the paltry reward of Rs.2,000/-. Plagued by incessant appeals to his good offices to secure surrender, the Abdali Sultan of that day reported the miscreant's death during a tribal affray. I did not credit his death.

Coghlan was a believer in prompt retaliation. He quoted the policy of the former Governors of Multan in the Punjab, arguing it was by offensive operations, and by employing one tribe against another, that the Governors restrained their depredations. Another and an able Resident of Aden, Sir William Merewether, a pupil of John Jacob, remarked on this policy as follows: "This did much harm, which is felt to this day. The system of reprisals is most objectionable. Punish evil-doers with the strong arm of authority, but do not follow the barbarous habits of barbarous robbers. A solemn punishment is appreciated. At the other game the barbarian will outwit you, and you only increase feelings of enmity and aversion." It was not till 1857 that we

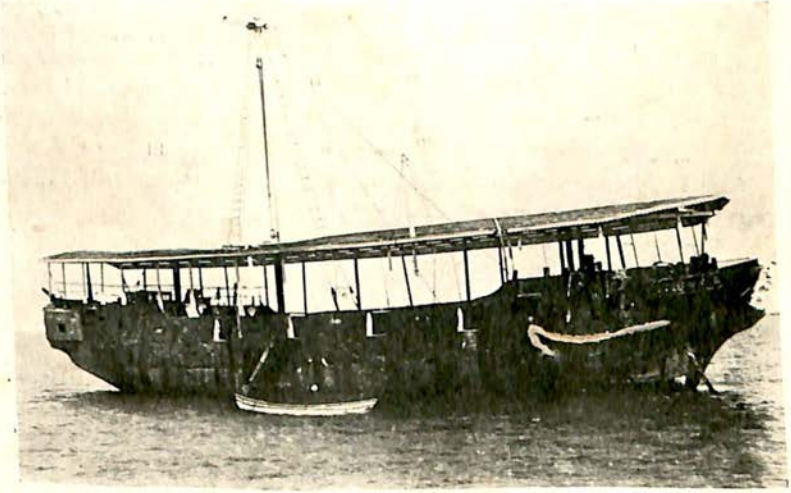
formally made up our differences with the Fadli and Akrabi tribes.

I must pass rapidly on. Haines had occasional differences with the Customs and the Military, whose rough and ready dealings with the Arabs thwarted and irritated one who ever set before him the potentialities of trade, and the necessity of maintaining excellent relations with the natives. He considered Aden first and foremost as a trading centre to which trade should be invited from Somaliland and beyond. His aims on this score were opposed by the military, who decided in 1846 that "Aden is a fortified place."

The British troops and their families found the Crater position very trying; many of these quartered in the Isthmus were in huts, and in the hot weather would creep for shelter into the caves in the hills. Haines proposed to build a sanatorium on Steamer Point, but the Government of Bombay were in opposition, and "unprepared to incur any extra charge arising from its being a place of resort for families from the Cantonment of Aden." His Crater residence was dilapidated, and parts fell down on the concussion of the 8 p.m. gun. There was scanty accommodation in his house for guests, and he had to "place three to four gentlemen in one room," nor had he a room "fit for dining a small party"; and so he put up a small thatched building close by, with a dining-room and two small sleeping- or sitting-rooms, which he hoped would meet with the approval of the Honourable Governor-in-Council. The largest room in his residence was only 11ft. x 11ft., and it was his dining-room, "and the servants have to pass through the office to get to it, which is very inconvenient, as both money and all records are kept there." To-day the Aden Residency on Ras Tarshain, Steamer Point, is a long barn, fitted with a few sleeping-cages approached by steep staircases. Over the question of the fittest site for a Cantonment Haines had a preference for the Crater position as the best all-year-round residence for troops. The suitability or otherwise of the Isthmus position is a matter of interest to Adenites to-day. Medical officers come and go, and



HAINES' RESIDENCE IN CRATER, NOW THE ARAB GUEST-HOUSE.



THE BRIG-OF-WAR, "EUPHRATES," USED BY HAINES IN BLOCKADING OPERATIONS.

their opinions are in a state of flux. During my experience of Aden I have known the Isthmus position first condemned, then approved, once more condemned, and finally occupied by British troops. It is usually waterlogged. Does the curse of Cain, sepultured over Aden's Main Pass, affect the minds of local magnates? If not Cain, then perhaps *Adenitis* is the cause. This is a local disease, and does not centre in the lymphatic glands as described in the pharmacopœia. Whatever the cause of the malady, the effect is disastrous. Aden has prospered to a certain point, and cannot continue. The frequent changes of Residents in later years may be a contributory cause of its political and commercial sterility—this, and the fact that the general officers who combine the offices of soldier and administrator are in most cases unfitted by training to fill the bill. So long as Simla nominates a G.O.C. who shall *ipso facto* be Political Resident, there is no hope for Aden. When a General Officer is not required in India he is given this plum of the Bombay Political Department. Haines was right. Aden is pre-eminently a commercial centre. Its growth has been retarded by militarists who style it a fortress only!

In 1854 the military authorities of Bombay brought to notice the incomplete and inefficient state of the Harbour and Crater defences, and the damage and destruction which might be caused by enemy vessels was prominently exposed. Haines had again and again urged our deficiencies. In 1869 Lord Mayo, the incoming Viceroy, landed there, and noticed *inter alia* that the military defences might be considered as non-existent against an attack from armour-plated ships, or even ordinary vessels carrying heavy guns, and that, except as against native tribes and land-forces unsupplied with siege artillery, *it was not a fortress at all.* Lord Mayo advocated a railway connecting the Crater and the Isthmus position with Steamer Point, in order to reduce the numerical strength of the garrison. To-day we have a sort of a railway in Aden, but the positions are still unconnected, although there has been much ink-slinging on this point. A working motto for those who direct the

destinies of Aden would be this: *Non est loquendum, sed gubernandum.*

Even in the Great War Aden was inadequately defended against a bombardment from the East. I never understood why some of the German " Rovers " did not land a shell or two into Aden from this side, unless they found piracy on the high seas more lucrative.

I am reminded of a Military Parliamentarian who shortly before the war, when Lord Roberts was insisting on the compulsory training of the citizens in the use of the rifle, remarked it would be soon enough to comply when the Germans had actually landed. Lord Roberts was a voice crying in the wilderness.

The French Haji who visited Aden in 1843 had his own views on its battlements, and Alexandre Dumas makes him comment as follows: " Il faut rendre justice aux Anglais: ils s'entendent à fortifier, témoins Gibraltar et Malte. Au reste, ces fortifications sont bien plutôt élevées contre les Français et les Americains que contre les Arabes " (!) The Haji believed it would be almost impossible to take Aden from the sea, but it would be easy to incite the Somalis to rise and set fire to the bamboo houses. Aden might be retaken by the English fleet, but it would not be Aden any more. He was derisive in his opinion of the lingo spoken: " A Aden comme dans tout l'Orient, il y a une population qui parle ce mauvais Italien (*sic*), qu'on appelle la langue franque (frengi) ! "

It is instructive to read the conflicting views of those in high authority anent Aden's *raison d'être.* The Government of Bombay in March, 1853, voiced their views thus: " The distinction attempted to be drawn between the defence of the garrison and that of the town the Governor-in-Council does not clearly understand. The extensive and costly fortifications erected are usually supposed to be intended for the defence of the Peninsula generally, and for the special purpose of preventing and repelling the incursions of Arabs across the Isthmus; and in this purpose the town of Aden must be considered as entitled at least to a share. Supposing the town to be altogether out of the question, the Isthmus works, regarded as a

fortress, are not secure, if bodies can slip round either flank unperceived and obtain the command of the valley, with the wells . . . although it has been laid down as a principle that the *Town* of Aden is not to receive the first or even the second consideration, it has always been assumed that it has to receive *some* consideration, and that its protection is a part, and a decided part, of the defensive system in which the fortifications have been raised."

In the Great War the town of Aden was at first not at all considered. The Treasury was removed to the Point, and the safety of the town-folk was a secondary problem. A political remonstrance was recorded, for the act savoured of panic, and would be misconstrued by the local population.

In September, 1853, the Government of Bombay in the Military Department wrote to the Q.M.G. that "Government cannot altogether consent to the position that Aden is to be held only as a military post. The Peninsula has been a British possession for thirteen years, and, by encouragement given to trade, a town has risen up which contains more than 20,000 inhabitants. It is too late to enquire whether the policy adopted has been right or wrong; the effect is evident, and the fact that there is a flourishing town to be protected, in security of which the British national faith and honour are involved, cannot be ignored. His Lordship-in-Council, therefore, considers that the measures of Government must be governed by a due consideration for the people of Aden, as well as for the preservation of the proper efficacy of the garrison; and he cannot entirely agree with the Commander-in-Chief that every measure concerning Aden should be mainly considered with reference to the perfect efficiency of the troops. The principle may be strained too far; if sacrifices are to be made and hardships to be endured, the soldiery might justly and properly, under certain conceivable circumstances, be called upon to bear their share. The Governor-in-Council deems it quite unnecessary to define which of these two parties should be first, and which last, in his consideration; the

two are not opposed to each other, and in importance they may for all practical purposes be viewed alike. His Lordship-in-Council has no doubt that the complete efficiency of the garrison may be maintained without touching on the just rights and interests of the people who have settled in Aden in full reliance on the protection of the British flag. The expediency of placing Aden under a Lieutenant-Governor, with political, judicial, and military authority combined in one person, was considered some years ago. The advantages of such a combination were obvious, but the Home Government entertained objections to the plan and it was dropped. . . ."

How good this all reads, and a strong defence of civil rights, but in the following month the same Government wrote to Haines: "In the opinion of Government the military importance of Aden is to be considered paramount to its commercial improvement, and should be the first object in view." What a falling-off there was! Ye did run well; who did hinder you? From this point dates Aden's decline as a commercial centre. It has never recovered.

I could write much more of Haines at Aden, and the old records disclose many and interesting sidelights into that great man's character—his dealings with the King of Shoa; his efforts to secure Free Trade; his belief in the vast potentialities of the coffee trade; the *genesis* of Aden's churches and cemeteries; some interesting remarks on the Moplahs, who even then were a thorn in our side. Haines' opinion of the relative value of Arabs, Somalis, and Indians reveals his infinite knowledge of human character, and the varied extent of his labours. Nothing was too small for his detailed treatment. In the words of Thoreau, "His life was sublimely trivial for the good of men."

His Customs Office was worked under his supervision by an Arab of the old Aden régime, aided by a Jew. Afterwards some Eurasians were employed. They were guilty of defalcations and were summarily dismissed. I think they played a part in his subsequent downfall. Haines used to advance monies to sea-captains, and such

transactions were duly reported to Government. He had often called for a trained staff, but none were forthcoming. At the close of 1853 a Commission was appointed to examine the public accounts, and a large deficiency was discovered. Both Haines and his able Lieutenant, Cruttenden, were sent to Bombay, and a new régime was inaugurated. The Resident and his assistant were thereafter officers of the Indian Army.

Haines was charged in Bombay before a jury on two separate criminal counts, and he was acquitted on both. The deficiency, however, had to be made good, and this distinguished officer was cast into a debtor's jail. He was taken out after six years' incarceration for a short time, as his health was seriously impaired, but his "Day of Certainty" had come, and he passed away.

There is a tombstone to his memory in the Colaba Cemetery of Bombay; there is no legend save the date of his death—the 16th June, 1860. He was aged fifty-eight years.

"Sic itur ad astra."

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# CHAPTER FOUR

## THE TURKS IN THE YEMEN

THE removal of the Egyptians from the Yemen in 1840 was the work of the Porte, acting largely at the instance of the British Government. Muhammad Ali Pasha was over ambitious. The Turks, as we have seen, missed a great opportunity. They might have given over the Yemen in its entirety to the Imam of Sana and retained merely their own suzerainty. Their weakness prompted half-measures, and so two kingdoms were set up, one in the hills and the other in the lowlands of the Yemen.

There was, perhaps, some method in their madness, for the puppet of Abu 'Arîsh whom they set up they could, and did, thereafter dethrone, themselves taking his place. Theirs was the camel's nose thrust through the flap of the Arab tent. The camel soon entered bodily, and in 1872 the Turks created of the Yemen one *vilayat*, which was divided into four *mutasarrifs* (prefectures) at Ta'izz, Sana, 'Asîr, and Hodeida. The Wali, or Governor, of the Yemen resided at Sana. Each of these prefectures was subdivided into Kada's under *Kaimakams*. Ta'izz comprised Ibb, 'Udein, Hujariya, Mokha, and Kataba; Sana compassed J. Harâz, Hijja, Dhamâr, Yerim, Radâ', and 'Amrân; 'Asîr held, amongst others, Mihâil or Abha, Rijâl al Ma', Kunfidha; while under Hodeida were Zebid, Luhaiya, Zeidiya, Reïma, Hajur, Beit al Fakîh, Bâjil, and Abu 'Arîsh. In the Hijaz the Governor-General lived at Tâïf, and there were planted two mutasarrifs of Jedda and Al Medina, to the latter of whom was subordinated a Kaimakam at Yambû', its port.

The Damascus-Medina railway was thereafter engineered by the Sultan Abdul Hamid, who was schooled by Germany. It was a strategic line, and its end was to dominate Arabia. Its construction was hailed with

joy by the Moslems of India, but was an object of aversion to the conservative Arabs of the Province, who were quick to foresee loss of revenues from the pilgrims conducted to the two sacred cities; and they dreaded the opening up of this tract to the possible gaze of non-Moslem foreigners. It was, however, the construction in 1869 of the Suez Canal that caused the awakening of the East, and of Turkey in particular, to the importance of Arabia and its commerce.

The Sultan-Caliph's authority in Arabia was little more than a geographical expression. The Turks were never happy in the Hijaz, and, in the Yemen, rebellion against the rule of the Porte was both fiery and continuous. The Arabs revered the Turkish Caliph even in that part of the Yemen, where the Zeidi creed presented a contrary element.

The rule of the Turkish Governors was not always popular. A common expression of Arabs when discussing the relative merits of the British and the Turks was, *Nârukum wa la jannat al Turk*—words which sound sinister, but which are intended as a compliment to the British: "Better go to hell with you than share the Paradise of the Turks." Or, again, they would quote of the Turks the woman's address to the Kadi al Hariri: "The face of al Hariri is that of an ape, but necessity compels me to approach him." There were, of course, honest and popular Governors of the Yemen. I would especially cite Mahmud Nadim Bey, whose tact and love of the Arabs smoothed over the differences between the Imam of Sana and the Porte. Without his persuasive personality the Governor-General Izzet Pasha could never, even with the vast sums he paid in 1911, have secured the Imam's adhesion to Turkey during the Italo-Turkish war. The underlings of the Turkish régime often disgusted the Arabs by their high-handed methods, and this prejudiced the Turkish cause. The Turks were styled *al Arwam*, the folk of Rum, or Byzantium. Another and sinister style was Bani Kintura. In the 1st Chronicles *Keturah* is called Abraham's concubine, who gave him six sons. Moslems describe Kintura or Kintur as an

Arab woman of good stock. Four of the sons settled in Khurasan and begat Turks of that name.

The Zeidi element in the Yemen Hills was ever the Turkish bugbear. The tribesmen of the Hashid and Bâkil, one of the finest fighting clans in the Yemen, and more especially the latter's sub-division of the Dhu Muhammad and the Dhu Husein, were fanatically inclined against the Turkish domination. They form the chief support of the Imam in the field. A close-fisted Imam finds it hard to control them, and when in 1911, to combat Italy, the Turks and the Imam buried the hatchet in a ten years' truce, the Imam was glad to let the Turks pay these tribesmen their salaries direct. The Turkish rule in the Yemen has been vilified as one of *Divide and Rule.* I do not see how they could have done otherwise. They found the Arabs divided by time-honoured custom. The Arab motto is Seneca's "Non sumus sub rege; sibi quisque se vindicet," or, "Let each look to himself." The Idrisi Saiyid of Sabia, in the 'Asîr Province of the Yemen, had come into prominence in 1907. He had ingratiated himself with the wild tribes of Abu 'Arîsh. At Abha, the capital, his name was proverbial as a magician, although his rule there has never materialised, for Abha is a city of Sherifs, who, though they claim independence, look rather to the Hijaz. The Idrisi belongs to the Ahmedi Tarika or Way. The Mad Mullah of Somaliland was allied to the Rashidi Way. It was the Ahmedi sect which gave an impetus to the African Senusi. The Idrisi Saiyid Muhammad bin Ali has descended from this Ahmed who hailed from Fez. Muhammad Ali has ever aspired to succeed to the heritage of the Sherifs of Abu 'Arîsh, whom I have discussed in the previous chapter. I have described in the second chapter the Turkish error in setting up the Sherifs of Abu 'Arîsh against the House of Sana.

The Turks discovered in 1911 their past error, and, unable to tame the Idrisi, they induced Sherif Husein of Mecca (now King Husein) to help them efface that Ruler. Suleiman Pasha, though an able Turkish General, was ill-equipped by the Porte, as he told me when I met

him in Damascus in 1913, and he could do but little. The Turks and the Meccan Sherif overran part of the 'Asîr coastline and devastated some of the Idrisi towns. They with difficulty released the Turkish forces beleaguered in Abha in the hills, and then retired, leaving resentment in their wake. The Idrisi had enlisted the tribesmen of Bani 'Asîr, whose martial prowess Suleiman Pasha warmly eulogised.

The Imam of Sana was an implacable foe to the Idrisi, and later Turkish endeavours to reconcile these two belligerents were all in vain.

The Turks in the Yemen might have taken their cue from the Italians in Eritrea and disarmed the populace, but they relied rather on the common bond of Islam's fraternity. They were confronted with divided Arab interests in high places. I do not defend the policy of *Divide and Rule*, but it is unfair in general terms to decry it. In India we have had this policy more thrust upon us than wittingly adopted. The Turks shaped their policy in view of the Arab dissensions all about them, and this is the explanation of the partial treatment accorded to the Arabs. The Arab unit is not the tribe even, but rather the family. The Arabs cannot combine any more than could the Britons in the time of Agricola. Constant tribal differences were rife in the Prophet's time, and in the Koran Allah has written: "We have created you, O men, into tribes and sects that you may get to know one another." These differences necessitated Turkish interference, and while one Arab party adhering to the Turkish cause "scored," the other was "scored off." So with the *Ottomanisation* of the Yemen, for which Arabs have coined the word *tatrik*, or *Turquisation*. In other words, and in plain English, the Turks were intent on "painting the map red." Thus phrased, the policy will sound more reasonable! Are we not Anglicising India? Might it not have been better to let India develop on her own lines? Thoughtful Indian reformers, schooled in the strictest Moderate's creed, have asked this of me. Having educated Indians to think imperially, why affect surprise and consternation when her *Gandhis*,

" et hoc genus omne," ask us, in the sincerest form of flattery, to be allowed to " continue the motions " on Western lines? I like Walt Whitman's lines:

I am the teacher of Athletes,
He that by me spreads a wider breast than my own proves the width of my own,
He most honours my style who learns under it to destroy the teacher.

The Westernising of India is striking a blow at her religious sense. Can it be truthfully said that the Ottomanisation of the Yemen aimed at the disintegration of Islam? I trow not. On the contrary, the sword of the Turks has ever been drawn in the defence of Islam, and a voice once came to Abu Hanifa, " Thy religion shall endure so long as the sword is in the hand of the Turks." The Turks tried to efface the blood-feud. They were up against a tough proposition. The Arabs are divided, as were the Germans of Tacitus' time, " by mutual misgivings " (*mutuo metu*) and by mountains. The *lex-talionis* is in the Arab's blood. The Koran says: " In this law of retaliation is your life! " There is much to be said for retaliation. Darwin descanted on the degradation of the tribes in Terra del Fuego under foreign and pacifying interference when he stated that perfect equality among the tribes must retard their civilisation. Only the other day in Aden an Arab said, " Our tribal *Maruwwa* (the Roman *virtus*) would become extinct if blood-feuds ceased," ; and a greater Arab than he has said, though the tradition may be *mursal*—that is, not traceable to its original source—" When you take to trade, and seize the tails of oxen, when, pleased with agriculture, you leave off fighting in the cause of religion, Allah will cause your humiliation." It is as the sword of Sir Hudibras grown rusty, which ate into itself for lack of somebody to hew and hack.

If you settle down, as did the Turks in the country, you cannot brook tribal feuds which stultify your very existence. The Turks believed their tenure worked in

the interests of peace. Martial's line is apposite to their case: *Si non errasset, fecerat ille minus.* The Arabs as a whole preferred the Turks' room to their company. Their feelings to usward are similar.

Independence is their watchword, and yet they lack cohesion to secure it. Unlike Zebulon, they cannot keep rank. They like a Government (*Daula*) provided it lets them alone. To quote Renan: "L'élément vraiment constituant de la nation n'est ni la race, ni la couleur, ni la langue, ni la religion, ni les frontières naturelles; *c'est le désir d'être ensemble.*"

The Irredentism of the Imam of Sana is no less urgent than that of the Fascisti of Italy. It is the Koranic: "Every sect is keenly happy in its peculiar environment." The Arabs' lack of adhesiveness prompted the Turkish policy. To quote the parallel of Tacitus' Ancient Britons, the Arabs were distracted with parties and party-spirit, nor indeed had the Turks "any weapon against the stronger races more effective than this, that these had no common purpose; rarely will two or three states confer to repulse a common danger; so they fight individually and are universally vanquished." The Arabs had to give hostages, and many of them abandoned their hostility. They were skilfully surrounded with Turkish garrisons.

The Arabs on our side of the border, delimited in 1904, clave to us mainly because of the doles we gave. Loving independence, of which shorn by the Turkish occupation, the Arabs squinted towards Aden and the Government there isolated, which had extended over inland tribes a shadowy protectorate which gave them money but entailed no interference with their customs or laws. The absence of taxation, the largesse paid without consideration—these are the factors that made us popular. Had we stepped into Turkish shoes, applied our laws, and disarmed the people—as *we* certainly must have done—they would have detested us and prayed for the return of the Turks. "Les Anglais sont justes, mais ils ne sont pas bons," is the correcter estimate of Arabs towards us.

The Turks as a rule let the Arabs manage their own

affairs with a minimum of interference, so long as they paid the annual tribute, the collection of which was entrusted to the farmers of revenue, who were changed periodically to check peculation. The Zerânîk tribesmen, whose homes lie to the south of Hodeida, have always given the Turks serious trouble. Their ports are at Ghuleifika, Al Tâïf, and Al Jâh. They are born pirates. They may perhaps be identified with the Ma'âzîb of Al Khazraji's history. The Turks had often to chastise these marauders. At times they would relax, relying on the ghostly assistance of the powerful Saiyids of Al Murâwa'a, who, more than any others, have long exercised some sort of control over these tribesmen. In certain tracts the Turks were compelled to rule, not with sceptres, but with scythes. "Men are animals carrying muskets," said Anatole France. The Arabs fall within this category. Themselves have admitted that diplomacy (siyâsa) is one thing, but repressive measures (tayâsa) are often imperative. Kindness—*jamîl*—they recommend, but alternating with the club—*samîl*.

The Turks realised it was easier to drive the flock than one sheep, but in Arabia men will not herd. Arabs are segregative and not gregarious. It is the wholesome fear of the holy man that can best operate upon the individual conscience. Not all Arabs, however, revere the saint, alive or dead. A Saiyid mounted on a richly caparisoned ass had once jostled me from the footpath. A friendly Sheikh waxed wrath at the other's incivility, and craved permission to follow up the rider and unseat him! I was once enquiring of the miraculous powers of a sepulchred saint, whose tomb annually belched forth volumes of smoke. Pious folk were thrilled thereby, but one sceptically inclined quoted the adage, *Karâmat al Wali dafanhu* —The saint's miraculous powers cease at his burial!

Bacon said, "Nothing destroyeth authority so much as the unequal and untimely exchange of power, pressed too far and relaxed too much"; while Burke believed that in large bodies the circulation of power must naturally be less vigorous at the extremities. "The Turk cannot govern Egypt and *Arabia* . . . as he governs

Thrace. Despotism itself is obliged to truck and huckster. The Sultan gets such obedience as he can. He governs with a loose rein that he may govern at all, and the whole vigour of his authority in his centre is derived from a prudent relaxation in all his borders." This Burke calls the "Eternal Law of extension and detached Empire." The Turks understood, on occasion, how to govern with a loose rein in Arabia, and better success would have attended their efforts had their selection of subordinate officers been more fortunate. It was a common saying of the Caliph Umar that he "put the right man in the right place." The Turkish rule has never been very stable in the Yemen, and their best men feared the loss of reputation in so little popular a province, which by reason of Turkish losses in the guerilla hill-warfare since 1892 was playfully termed the "The Cemetery of the Turks"—*mukbirat al atrâk*. One of the ancient Imams of Sana has said, and it is a commonplace in the Yemen, that it was incumbent on the Turks, if they would retain their supremacy in the country, to abandon to the Arabs all places written with an initial "S" (sâd); for example, Sana, Sabir, S'ada, and Sabia. The idea was that the Turks would do better to keep the coast-towns and leave the interior to the Imams. The Italians found this a better policy in their Tripoli possessions.

Sana, in the hills, the capital of the Yemen, latitude 15° 22′ N. and longitude 44° 32′ E., has ever been the Turkish objective. It is one of the many Zeidi strongholds, along with S'ada and Shahâra. During the wars between the Turks and the Imam, and especially from 1904 to 1911, it was now in Turkish hands, and now in the Imam's, and in a constant state of siege. Sana is the Headquarters of the 2nd Dynasty of the Imams of the Yemen, as S'ada, anciently called Jumā', was that of the 1st Dynasty, or Rassid Dynasty. Sabia is now the Headquarters of the Idrisi Saiyid, with its port of Jaizan—once written Jazan or Hairan (through confusion of the letters J and H). Sana, the *Uzal* of Genesis (x. 27), and its Arab name of Azal, was changed, it is said, to its present style in the sixth century by Abraha

and his invading hordes of Abyssinians, who, seeing the beauteous city lying in the plain below them, exclaimed: "What a *creation*," or San'â!

A writer has classified as "*Cities of Paradise*" the quartette of Mecca, Medina, Ailiya,[1] and Damascus; and he put Antioch, Tuwana, Stamboul,[2] and Sana in the category of *Cities of the Fire*. Tradition says that Sana was the first city built after the deluge. Its foundation is ascribed to Shem (Sâm). The Tabâbi'a or Himyarite Kings made their residence successively at Marib, Dhafâr, and Sana. In the Italian colony of Eritrea there is a place called Senafé. I met many Sana merchants there. These punningly say, "There is another Sana here"—or *Sana fihi*. Parts of Eritrea strikingly recall the Yemen, and also remind one of the country about Exmoor.

In 1904 an Arab Nationalist party materialised in Syria. Its aim was to relieve all Arabia from the Turkish yoke, and in 1905 this party addressed a proclamation to the European Powers asking their benevolent neutrality. There was published in Paris Negib Azoury Bey's book giving the programme, and styled, *Réveil de la nation Arabe dans l'Asie Turque*. The Arab homeland was to ignore the Sultan-Caliph of Stamboul, and above all else a separation was deemed essential in the interests of Islam between the Civil and the Spiritual Power. The Caliphate had become contemptible in the hands of the Turks. The aim of the League was to form an Arab Empire stretching from the Tigris and the Euphrates to the Isthmus of Suez, and from the Mediterranean Sea to the Gulf of Oman. A Sultan must be elected with a Constitution that should assure perfect liberty to the subjects. There should be complete autonomy in the Lebanon, in the Yemen provinces, in Nejd, and in Irak. The Throne would be offered to a scion of the Khedivial family of Egypt. Egypt itself should remain separate from this Arab Empire, for the Egyptians were essentially not of the Arab stock. The Sherif of Mecca was to become, on the

[1] i.e. Jerusalem, the Ælia Capitalina of the Emperor Hadrian.

[2] Said to be derived from the Greek εἰς τὴν πολιν:—just as we say "to Town."

other hand, the Caliph of Islam, and his political rule should be confined within the limits of the Hijaz. This was called the pacific solution of the Eastern question. The strategic railroads planned by Abdul Hamid for the subjection of Arab peoples should be used by Arabs to exploit the immense wealth of the Arab homeland.

Yet another author—M. Eugène Jung—in his book entitled *Les Puissances devant la Rêvolte Arabe,* wrote that the awakening of the Arab nation indicated a world-crisis. The Imam Muhammad was no conqueror itching to reduce all Arabia to his rule, but an Arab directing a simultaneous effort against the Turks whom all hated. After thirty years of oppression the tribes of the Yemen had banded together round the person of this Imam, who in 1902 was some thirty-five years of age. He would impose no arbitrary conditions on his Arab allies, but merely asked their recognition of his suzerainty; one-tenth of the produce during the conduct of operations, and one-twentieth when peace was established.

This writer had no respect for the Turkish Caliphate. He says: "Unlike the Papacy, which is broad-based on a command of Christ (*sic*), the Caliphate has no religious, dogmatic, or traditional basis. No single verse of the Koran alludes to the Caliphate." The Prophet gave no thought to his successor, nor did he give a hint to his followers of the kind of Government that should continue after his decease. "If the Caliphate had some utility during the régime of the first three Caliphs, its continuance affords the best evidence of the enormity of the institution." The Arabian Caliphs, it was said, extended their conquests, and created a civilisation of astonishing brilliancy. The Turks, on the other hand, had worked to suppress the Arabs and their industries, and had diminished the prestige and dominion of Islam. The leading spirits of the Arab Movement would found a Sultanate exclusively political and constitutional. In the forefront of their programme was a proposal to give to Islam a universal Caliph, who would also be the temporal suzerain of a small state, wholly Moslem and confined within the limits of the Hijaz, from the Gulf of

Akaba to the Province of 'Asîr. This programme would be slightly modified if Imam Yahya of Sana should proclaim himself Sovereign of the Yemen and the Hijaz, and become the Commander of the Faithful.

This was a very pretty programme, but the writers had completely ignored the Arab idiosyncrasies. Now it is axiomatic that *the Arabs cannot unite.* Anyone who says the contrary has not studied the Arabs of to-day. There can at the most be only a unity (not union) in diversity. Later, in the Great War, King Husein of the Hijaz, egged on by the Foreign Office and by Egypt, neither of whom had grasped the Arab mentality, talked glibly of the "Arab Movement"—*al Nahda al 'Arabiya.* Husein even struck a medal to commemorate the *Movement,* to which he contributed in some measure, under Lawrence and his lieutenants; but Husein had no influence over other and co-equal Arab Potentates. I shall later on show how he fell short. Again, without Lord Allenby's successful movement alongside of them, the Hijaz Movement, recruited to some extent from Arabs of other provinces, would never have matured, in spite of the colossal sums paid by us to King Husein during the duration of the war. These moneys did not go in their entirety to the object for which they were contributed, but were frittered away in side-shows between rival Arab dynasties. There is no one Arab ruler who could initiate an Arab Movement, neither in Eugène Jung's time (1905), nor in the Great War, nor to-day in 1923. So it was that these best-laid schemes of Arab union did gang a-gley! When I come shortly to describe the Italo-Turkish War we shall see the political sagacity of the Turks, who, prior to hostilities, won over most of the Arab world, and the Indian, to Islam's cause. No small part of this success was due to the Sherif of Mecca (the present King Husein of the Hijaz) and to Sir Ahmed Fadl, that statesman Ruler of Lahej, near Aden, through whose agency the Sherif of Mecca largely operated.

Again, the Arab Movement Party had not appraised the mind of India's Moslems, nor that of the Amir of

Afghanistan. India would never discount the Turks' claim to the validity of the Caliphate, and in the Great War, while combating the Turks, they bitterly resented the Arab-Movement directed against the Sultan-Caliph. Indian opinion bulks very largely in the Moslem world to-day. That restlessly energetic and brilliant intellect, the late Sir Mark Sykes, who in the war, as one of " L.G.'s Myrmidons," crossed the seas to learn the mind of Islam towards the Caliph, was shocked when I suggested that the Caliphate had best be left with Turkey, and *à fortiori* so if Turkey was stripped of temporal power after the war. The world had no room for a newly-created and militant Arab Caliph whose besom might be over-cleanly in its sweep. An Arab Caliph to-day would awake as a giant refreshed by sleep and prove inconvenient. The Turks, by the prescriptive right of four centuries, by their superior civilisation and their " sweet reasonableness " in matters religious, are pre-eminently fitted to retain the Caliphate. No Christian can create a Caliph, and any Arab who arrogates the office overrates his importance in Islam.

It is natural that the Sultan-Caliphs have yearned for sovereignty over the two sacred cities of the Hijaz. Their occupation of the Yemen—and I include 'Asîr as an integral part—and of East-Central Arabia was less justifiable, and yet " none can adjudicate between snakes but a serpent." A congeries of autonomous Arab states is the goal to which Arabs should work. It is idle to expect to arrive there at once. Time alone will bring it about. We must leave the Arab nationalities alone to work out their own salvation, which will come from within. It will never respond to the moulding of foreign fingers—charm our Colonial Office never so wisely!

Much has been said of the anti-Islam bias of the Turks, and of their mutilation of the Koran to suit Pan-Turanian ideals. Kutaiba bin Muslim said of the Turks, " They are truly more strongly attached to their country than are the camels." With Easterners, patriotism goes hand in hand with the religious sense. The peculiar expositions of Holy Writ by our own Higher Critics; the Episcopal

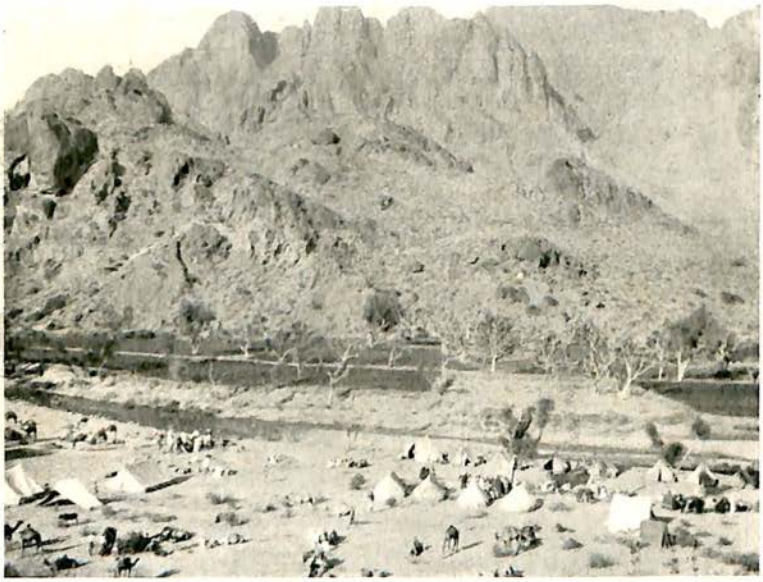
emendators of the Psalter; the crazy cult of the Anglo-Israelite school—all these, too, do not *per se* belie our Christian standing. It is possible to be over-religious, to deny to religion an adaptability to the progressive needs of the age. King Husein, for example, in oft-repeated manifestos, has declaimed against the liberal leanings of other Moslems towards female emancipation, as if the Koran had no message for to-day, while progressive Moslem India, in the words of one of their noted apologists, has gone so far as to assert that the Moslem Paradise of strict orthodoxy is " worse than a prostitutes' bazar." Another, Mirza Ghulam Ahmed, believed in transmigration, for otherwise he could not, as he claimed, be Krishna and Jesus in one. Moslems have said that worshippers of the Black Stone in the Kaaba are polytheists and idolators, and that prayers are valid even if one face in directions other than the Kibla. I found once a weary camel-trooper of my party, who had descended for the sunset prayer, his *back* turned to Mecca. I pointed him out to an Indian officer, who said, " Sahib, let this *ignoramus* be! Allah will condone a mistake caused by human frailty. Does not the Koran say, ' Wherever ye turn, there is the face of Allah?' " This is the All-Self of the Bhagavat Gita—unbounded, *facing everywhere.*

Another learned Moslem remarked that the " Koran is a rough diary of the Prophet." Religion will not decline because of the vagaries of its votaries, for the religious sense is often " une chose tout purement géographique." So I say that these Quixotic tiltings against the orthodoxy of the Turks are largely the work of enemy propagandists. I like the soft impeachment of the Koran, " Verily there be suspicions that are sins."

The Turks in 1918 have made their bow to the Yemen Province. History has repeated their exodus of 1630 A.D. Will the tribes and sects of the Arabian Peninsula at last " get to know each other " (Koran), and live at peace? None can prophesy certainly.

*Y'alam Allah wa' l zamân mu'allim*—Allah alone knows and time is the Revealer.

THE RULER OF DALA, AMIR SHAÏF BIN SEIF.



A CAMP IN THE HAUSHABI COUNTRY, WITH THE R. TIBAN AND J. SHIGAG, THE HOME OF THE IBEX.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE BRITISH OCCUPATION AT DALA IN THE ADEN HINTERLAND

IN 1902 we went to Dala, ninety-six miles north of Aden, because the Amir of Dala since 1872 had complained of Turkish inroads and tyranny. The Amirs originally held their territories as Viceregents of the Zeidi House of Sana, but in the passage of the years the Imams became weak, and the Amirs rebelled and kicked over the traces. No Arab ruler is, however, an autocrat. He rules just as long as his tribesmen, his co-equals, are satisfied with his office as their mouthpiece. If he prove deficient, he is replaced.

The Turks had begun to expand southwards, and coveted Jihâf, a fine, flat-topped hill, abounding in crops and some 360 wells. Its altitude is close on 8,000ft. It beetles over the Dala plateau to its east, and in the distance loom the equally lofty heights of Jabal Harir; while northwards one overlooks broad and fertile tracts backed by mountains, range after range; and to the left-front winds, silvery in the sun, the fertilising waters of the River Tiban, which once reached the sea at Sheikh 'Uthman, but now die in the desert sands about Lahej.

The Amir Shaïf of Dala claimed this hill, and produced Imamic deeds to substantiate his claim. Imamic or not—and there were many Arabs who believed these deeds were in part forgeries—there was not ample proof to show the overlordship on that hill of the Amir's House in face of the hillmen's own prerogative to enjoy the dues. A scrutiny of these various claims was judiciously omitted by our Commissioners as irrelevant to the broad issue before them. Our Representatives were Mr. Fitzmaurice (*Fâris Mâris*, or the skilled horseman), and Colonel Wahab, R.E. (later Wauhope). Arabs still chant the praises of them both.

The line was drawn and scrupulously observed by the Turks, but after our evacuation of the Hinterland in 1907 the Imam, as the Turkish influence waned, himself sought to recover his old-time domains. Reinforced by his pact with the Turks in 1911, after long years of fighting, the Imam, whose cause was waxing, still further pushed his claims, and to-day we have his forces inside what was once the Anglo-Turkish border.

Of one thing I am sure, that our occupation of Aden in 1839, and, later, our brief sojourn in Dala, did indirectly undermine the influence of Turkey in the Yemen —not through any set purpose of ours to such end, but by the attractive power of another Daula, or Government, which had appeared on the scene.

Our aim throughout our stay in the Aden Hinterland was carefully to refrain from aiding or abetting the Arabs against the Turks. Hundreds of Arabs have begged me, while Political Agent in Dala, to take over these tracts and, incidentally, to pay them stipends!

The Arab loves money though not to hoard it. Money is to him " like muck, of no use unless spread," *al Daula y'uti la tast'ati*—a Government gives and does not ask; The Turks " asked " ; we did not, and so our popularity. From a religious standpoint, the Arabs preferred the Turks. Even in Aden to-day, where British rule is popular because just, the Arab, if you ask him who is his Government, will invariably reply, *al daula al 'ulya*—that is, the Porte. The Arab is thinking spiritually.

To Arab importunities for British intervention I would invariably reply that we would do nothing to offend our good friends the Turks. The Arab was sceptical, and would reply by a proverb that the only intelligible rôle of a Government was to extend itself and swallow up others.

An Arab once quoted Plato as his idea of a Government: " Go to one who regards you as his inferior, but avoid one of your own social standing." A Government was " a fruitful tree which afforded you shelter " ; " a fathomless lake whose waters no buckets could lessen " ; " a candle at which the tribesmen might filch a light

without diminishing the flame" ; and yet even Governments must be kept in their place. The Sheikhs of the Mausata clan of Yâfa', within our sphere, bound themselves by a convention with the Turkish Arabs across the border at Mures to maintain order on the border. Mausata wrote to me that Governments had *their rules*, but our Arabs should, in case of Turkish encroachments, protect the British limit ; whereas if the British encroached on the Turkish border, it was the Muresis duty to defend Turkish rights ; and the reason given was "because the two Governments depend on, and are guided by, the people of the country." A good exposition of the importance of the cult of the tribesman ! The Arabs would live their own lives in spite of the border-line, and ignore the Governments, unless these latter grew restive and broke the peace by aggressive acts. Our border-line with the Turks was at places artificial and inconvenient. Some of the states, such as Juban, which supplies so many of Aden's coal-coolies, and firemen of ocean-going steamers, were placed on the Turkish side, and yet Juban, Beni Dabyân, and N'awa were appanages, or *hulafa*, of Mausata, one of the most influential clans of *Yâfa'*, a tract admittedly within our border.

The majority of Arabs cared not at all for the border-line which was one between two Governments. Their friendships and quarrels *inter se* did not, they said, affect either Government. Persons aggrieved with the decisions of the Kadi's courts on our side of the border would appeal direct to the court at Jibla on the Turkish side. There was free inter-communication between the states on both sides. The Turks ruled their tribesmen as a resident Power. They levied tribute. We lived in Aden and came up, for a time, to fix the Anglo-Turkish border. We gave our advice ; stayed to consolidate the Amir of Dala's position ; utilised our stay to familiarise outlying tracts, such as Yâfa' on our North-East Border, with British ways, and aimed to convert suspicion into confidence. I mediated, at the instance of disputants, in their blood-feuds, appealing to Koranic *imprimatur* ;

toured throughout the district in my charge; mixed freely with the tribesmen, and kneaded-in, as unobtrusively as possible, the leaven of British influence. The experience gained was invaluable to us thereafter. When in September, 1907, after three years' stay in the country, we returned to Aden, many of the tribes bewailed our departure, and prophesied tribal ruptures and general chaos. Had we materially interfered with the Arabs, our venture would have been harmful to our prestige; that it was quite the reverse, their clamour at our exit fully proved. Our presence served to keep the country quiet, and the evacuation was unnecessary and baneful.

In the first year we had half a battalion of the 3rd Rifle Brigade, one Indian Regiment, a few field guns, some Sappers and Miners; and 21 troopers of the Aden Troop as my personal escort. During the third year, the British Regiment was removed, and I was left with 150 men of the Madras Pioneers, and 2 machine-guns. Before the order was given—"Dala est delenda"—I offered to remain with a still further reduced garrison, but this was vetoed as a dangerous experiment, and the whole force was withdrawn. Our withdrawal was certain proof to the Arabs that the Hinterland no longer interested us. The Imam was free to extend his influence. It was easy for the Turks when they joined the Triplice in November, 1914, to intrigue with Arabs on our frontier who had grown accustomed to our absence; and simple for them, in the absence of a railway, to make a rapid descent from Mâwia, where their forces were long concentrated; and from the Hujariya district to the south. Debouching by a pass above Nobat Dukaim, they brought in their train their Arab "Saunterers" (Mujèhidin),[1] along with some of our stipendiaries, who had seen our political apathy which spelled decline or impotence.

The Amir of Dala gave me a great deal of trouble when I first went up. He expected me to enforce obedience from his tribesmen. This I steadfastly refused to do,

[1] Thurean explains this word to mean idle folk who roved about in the Middle Ages asking charity, under pretence of going *á Sainte-Terre*. Hence *Sainte-Terrers, Saunterers* or *Holy Landers*. *Majahidin* are those engaged in a Jihad, or Holy War.

pointing out that a house artificially propped up would quickly crumble away when we went.

The cult of the tribesman, called in Arabic *Al Kabyala*, or *Kablûla*, is peculiar. An Arab chief has *subjects* (ra'âya) who pay taxes and render obligatory military service. He has also *tribesmen* (Kabâil), who come to his call if they are so disposed. Of these some receive no payment; others demand a nominal sum; and the chief must further guarantee the payment of dollars to next-of-kin if a tribesman is killed or wounded on his behalf. A tribesman is a superior individual who considers the chief as his mere mouthpiece. Their social positions are equal. A tribesman brooks no fetters. His dagger enforces respect.

The chiefs had the privilege of writing recommendatory letters to introduce their well-disposed tribesmen to British largesse, and this practice, begun, not in the Hinterland, but years ago by Haines in Aden, and still continued, is one of the means by which we placate the chief and his tribesmen. It is an expensive method, and if discontinued would give trouble at first on the trade-routes. A better way, and free from the stigma of blackmail, was to have employed the tribesmen as levies along the routes, with remuneration for actual work done. The levy teaches discipline, and ensures that money goes to the many, and is not disbursed at his sweet pleasure by the chief to a few. This scheme was, however, shelved by Government; otherwise, we should have had in the Great War a useful nucleus of men, trained, and ready to dispute the descent of the Turks.

We certainly lost prestige after our retirement from Dala in 1907, whatever those responsible for the movement have declared to the contrary. We lost, too, a fine sanatorium for our troops on Jabal Jihâf. A light railway would have been necessary, and the alignment presented few difficulties. Such a project would have convinced the Arabs and Turks that we were a factor to be reckoned with. To assert we were interfering with Arabs was idle.

I shall speak in another chapter of the Italian " tang "

in the Yemen. The Italians, who did not live in the country at any point, had less interest than we in establishing a "nexus," but their action was commendable, subtle, and far-reaching. Not till the Great War was nearly over did we raise one Arab battalion, but we declined to put them to the test, although the Italians had tried them in Tripoli and were enthusiastic over their efficiency and fire-discipline.

Just before our return to Aden in 1907, a Sheikh who foretold the coming predominance of the Imam with the exit of the Turks, advised us to consolidate our position. The advice given me was not to advance any further, but to let our influence radiate from Dala as a centre. Our presence in the Hinterland did, I admit, annoy the Turks, but we had as much right in our sphere as they in theirs. They were the interlopers who had conquered the country; we had gone up, for a purpose, at Arab invitation.

The Turks even objected to our building a road up the Khuraiba Pass into Dala. The private hospital, which I opened for Arabs, was anathema to them. A mooted sanatorium for our troops they resented. I like the Turks, and sympathise in their loss of the Yemen, for I think they are peculiarly fitted to tackle Arabs, but I could never grasp the mentality which quarrelled with *our* entry on the scene. The Turks had no valid ground to fear our further advance for self-aggrandisement. Our disinterested conduct in the past was indicative of the future. A few Arabs on our North-East Border took slight umbrage when, as Political Agent of the Hinterland, the flag floated over my camp, and they asked the meaning of the somewhat carelessly worded *communiqué* from Aden which explained my appointment as Agent in territories "under our protection."[1] This was no great innovation, for we had already concluded protective treaties with all save one of our stipendiaries. Viewed, however, in the light of our recent move up country, it had been better to use the less objectionable wording—"within our ken."[2]

[1] taht al himâya. [2] taht al nadhâra.

THE PALACE OF THE HAUSHABI SULTAN AT MUSEMIR.

A TYPICAL YEMEN VILLAGE.

I remember when, on his visit to Egypt in 1913, the Turkish Government had decorated the Sultan of Lahej with the insignia of the Medjidieh Order, and the Cairo papers had "written up" the Lahej state and its dependence on the British, that the Sultan, Sir Ahmed Fadl, sent me copies of the journals, where in the margins he had added caustic denials of our tutelage! Sir Ahmed was a shrewd statesman. He spoke truly, for, as I have before stated, we have no "protectorate" treaty with his House, but our protection, on occasion, he would eagerly have claimed, and I was amused to note the spirit of independence he affected. Sir Ahmed depended largely on Aden, for, as the Sanskrit writer says, "Kings, women, and creepers cling closely to things in their vicinity."

I am afraid my good friends the Turks, themselves apprehensive of our forward movement, had impressed the Arab mind with the sinister character of our aims, and that the Abdali, freshly decorated, was acting the rôle of Islam repudiating the shadow of a Christian Power. Perhaps the Abdali wrote with his tongue in his cheek. Sir Ahmed was one of my intimate friends. His death in March, 1914, was a personal and irreparable loss.

We owe much to the House of Lahej. We robbed the Abdali of Aden, and for a term of years he was naturally resentful, waxed fat, and kicked. By a policy of attrition, and sympathetic treatment, Haines and his followers in office won over successive Sultans to our cause. Lahej in turn has gained much by propinquity to us. It is called the "Gate of Aden." In our earlier years, and owing largely to the timid policy of Government, we were forced to work solely through Lahej, and we urged him to avenge our personal insults—a grave mistake. It was the "Keddah System" by which an elephant is tamed, and used to decoy other and rogue elephants. It was thought economical and convenient for us to remain in Aden, exclusive and isolated, and to deal by proxy with those at a distance. The demerit of the system was the exaggeration of one man, who truly got a

swollen head, and it tended to make other and equally important chiefs jealous. Moreover, it placed Lahej in an awkward predicament. The late Mr. George Wyman Bury, however, errs when in his *Pan Islam* he remarks that " the policy in Aden, *since* the Boundary Commission withdrew in 1904, was one of *laissez-faire*, and Aden depended for news of her Protectorate on official files and native report, especially on that much overrated friend and ally, the Lahej Sultanate." This is ungenerous to the Sultan, and inexact as regard ourselves. I am sorry to have to traverse the remarks of one who has passed over, who was a keen and intrepid explorer of Arabia, and a close observer of the Arab people ; but a regard for the facts and a more intimate knowledge of our connections with Lahej, compel me to correct his dictum.

I have explained the earlier hostility to us of Lahej, and I demur to this wholesale belittlement of our ally's utility. Our policy completely changed when and after we went up to Dala to delimit the border. The military were then supreme, and Capt. Warneford was the Political Officer attached to the military forces, with Mr. Bury as his assistant. On Warneford's murder, and after the succession for seven months of Major Merewether, I became the permanent Political Agent. Only after Mr. Bury's disappearance was the frontier in political charge, and the military were in attendance.

The Sultan of Lahej at first looked askance at our sojourn up-country, fearing that our first-hand acquaintance with the tribes would put his nose out of joint. Even then I was careful to cultivate the friendship of Sir Ahmed, for it was politic to associate that House with Aden. It is courteous to do so. You lose nothing materially, and you stand to win by conciliating him. It is unwise to kick away the ladder up which you have climbed. After close on thirty years of political experience, I assert that even if you suggest the reform, it is best to let the working of it appear as emanating from the chief. I have sat for hours with Arabs, and have been well repaid, if I have persuaded them that our interests, British and Arab,

are identically and indivisibly the same. One curse of our rule in India has been excessive self-assertion. I do not decry what Britons have done, but I believe more has been silently effected by a sympathetic community of interests. I dislike the formula of "conqueror and conquered," and even the hackneyed expression "paramount power" has a sanctimonious ring. The Arab associates himself with the Paramount Partner, but that Partner is Allah. This is not conceit, but submission—or *al Islam.*

In the late war with Turkey, we failed to protect our Protégés. The Abdali Sir Ahmed Bin Ali put up a very creditable opposition with his limited means before yielding to the pressure of superior Turkish forces. He then held to Lahej, till, his position becoming untenable, he retired to Aden, wounded in the confusion of the night by our troops. He died there under an operation, and was succeeded by his cousin, the present Sir Abdul Karim. This latter, exiled in Aden, never lost confidence in our cause, in spite of our virtual inaction, and the defection of his subjects during the Turkish occupation of his capital. Sir Abdul Karim is one of our staunchest friends. If one remembers the once undying animosity of that House, and views its friendly attitude to-day, let us, while applauding, as a cause, the invariable display of British justice and sympathy, not grudge our full appreciation of the surprising success of the House which has retained through the long years the Arab *sobriquet* of "Abuna," our Father. The continued popularity of the Abdali Sultan is a proof of the consistency of the British attitude towards his throne. Nor indeed, since the evacuation of Dala, with our extra friendships personally acquired, are we politically dependent on the House of Lahej. We still ask our neighbour for his advice; it is politic to do so. We ever shape our own policy, and no longer is the Abdali envious of our independent intercourse with our Protégés. I have laboured this point, because it is a capital one, and the keynote of our policy with the tribes beyond Aden.

I trust I have not maligned the Turks in discussing

their suspicions of our motives. I recall their earlier friendliness, the bedrock fraternity that once existed between the two nations, and I would place on record the despatch in 1849 of the Grand Vizier to Habib Pasha, the Governor of Jedda, anent the slights given to British merchantmen and our flag: "Le fait est cependant, et on n'a pas besoin de le dire, que d'après *la parfaite et eternelle amitié qui existe* entre l'Empire Ottoman et la Grande-Bretagne, il faut que les sujets et les negociens anglais soient en chaque occasion protégés."

The Jews of the Yemen deserve special study. I always regret that the cult of the Arab tribesmen absorbed my attentions, to their practical exclusion. The Arab despises the Jew, whose quarters in the villages are apart and squalid. Their synagogues are mud structures indistinguishable from their dwelling-houses. The Jew is not allowed to carry arms, but Arabs will escort their caravans for a nominal payment. Their women may not wear garments with decorated borders. Both sexes are employed as secret messengers. They can pass through the midst of tribes at warfare and will not be molested.

"Eat with a Jew"—and this has Koranic sanction—"but do not walk in his company"—this is tribal, not Koranic! If a Jew be killed by a tribesman, no blood-wit (*dia*) is countenanced. In Arab parlance, a "cap full of money" is paid to the next-of-kin by the murderer's tribesmen.

The Sultan of Lahej, Sir Ahmed Fadl, created consternation when, on the occasion of a Lahej Jew being murdered in the market-place of Lahej by a tribesman of an adjoining chieftain, he arraigned the murderer before the Kadi and insisted on the death sentence. The Kadi objected, pleading the sanction of Arab custom. Sir Ahmed, however, was obdurate. The Jew had been under his protection, and how else than by death could the stigma attaching to the Sultan's reputation be removed? The man was executed on the spot of his crime, and Jewry quailed before the anticipation of revenge.

The Turks had a pleasanter way with the Jews. Leading Jews in Aden were sorry when the Turkish régime came to an end in 1918. Was the Turk playing the rôle of Gallio? I think not. It was not his total unconcern that is here revealed, but rather his paternal oversight, a proof of his impartial rule over all creeds and classes.

In the Halmin country, which borders on Lower Yâfa', where I made an extensive tour in 1905, is the Jewish village of Al Mansura. This village is the exception testing the rule of Jewish obloquy. A man of this village lost a kid, which was stolen by a tribesman of the Radfan Hills. The Jew appealed to the leper Sheikh of the tribe concerned, and he spoke with unwonted boldness. "If you are *tribesmen*, well and good; if not, we do reckon you as one of ourselves." The Sheikh assembled his tribe in conclave and asked them what they would do. If they decided on inaction, they had better grind corn with the women-folk! The phrase is the last word of withering scorn. The tribe, stung to the quick, decided on action. The thief was fined the cost of the kid, and had to pay a *douceur* to the leper Sheikh!

Proverbs anent the Jews are not complimentary. Let me give a few. The first contains a hit at the Christians too. "May the curse of God rest first on the Jews, then on the Jews, and then on the Christian dead!" "The Jew's a Jew though he turn Moslem, for his curl (*zunnâr*) remains in his heart." "He who lies will suffer as the Jew will suffer." "If I have lied, write me down as a Jew."

The problem of the importation of arms was a serious one. The Sultan of Lahej was greatly exercised over the incursions of the Subehi *canaille*, whom a writer has aptly described as "chevaliers-brigands." The Sultan was suspected by the Turks of importing arms, which were sent to the Imam. This, of course, was a libel. He required arms in self-defence and to chastise these miscreants. The French from Djibouti pushed a lot of arms into Arabia. The Le Gras carbine was the weapon. The Arabs were able to refill these cartridge-cases at home. The Subehis used to land arms and ammunition at Ras al 'Ara, to

Aden's west, till the Sultan put his guards at this inlet. In 1883 the Government of India had ruled that arms of precision should not enter our Protectorate, but the Arab craves a rifle and finds a way to get it. Eventually, we advocated the recalling of the Le Gras and replacing it by our Martini-Henry rifle, so keeping some check on the ammunition. Arabia is flooded with arms, for in the Great War we put in brands of all kinds. The difficulty hereafter to be faced by both France and Italy is the exportation of these arms from Arabia back into the French and Italian possessions in Africa. If we were to adopt the "Sandemanian" policy of Beluchistan and freely move about our Protectorate, the natives would gradually learn the arts of peace, and only so would it be possible to kill the traffic in arms.

By our stay in the Hinterland of Aden we formed a "neutral zone" between ourselves and the Turks. We thus kept the Turks at arm's length. A modern writer would call this one of those "isolating devices which are Great Britain's peculiar contribution to world-diplomacy." It serves its purpose, inasmuch as it left the Arabs free scope for self-development. Now that the Turk has gone, this policy has no meaning. We should henceforth welcome the fraternisation of Arab with Arab, even if this goal be reached not without some disturbances or even blood-letting. In any case, we learnt much during our temporary stay by personal intercourse. D'Israeli said, "The great thing in politics is the personal." He might have used the superlative—"greatest."

Apart from the loss of a much-needed sanatorium for Aden, I am not at this stage, and *after the Turkish exodus*, so sorry to have returned to Aden. Tod, in his *Rajasthan*, discusses the dread of amalgamation with us which was strongly felt by the mediatised Rajput Princes of India. He believed such a result would be opposed, not only to their happiness, but to our own stability. The same idea is held by Arabs. They do not want us to step into Turkish shoes and rule over them. It is never such a tang of Britain I have advocated, and even protection may in course of time lead to annexation. It is a mistake

to repeat the mistakes of India and Egypt. We do not want even to see the Arabs anglicised. As Tod remarked, it is true in politics that distance lends enchantment to the view. An agency at Lahej, or even higher up-country, would suffice, if the Agent were well chosen; otherwise it is best to leave the Arab severely alone. Our rule in Aden, at a distance, is the best object-lesson we can hold up before them. Our stay in our Hinterland did not suggest annexation, firstly because it was temporary, and next, because it was so far away from our base at Aden. It was clear to all that in the 100-mile interval between Aden and Dala the Arab was free to do just as he pleased.

The duties of a Political Agent in Dala were varied Not a dull day went by. Blood-feuds occupied the major portion of my time. I amassed a wealth of the lore of the folk, their songs and modes of thought. Ink-shedding was uncongenial to me, and my omission to function in this respect distressed Aden. It is better policy to eschew reports. Blue-books look pretty, but their manufacture absorbs time which should be devoted to learning one's job. It "pays" perhaps, to keep in the limelight, but surely the distinguished educationist was right when she wrote: "The equipment of British officials consists in an exhaustive knowledge of blue-books, a bundle of the very best intentions, and a carefully cultivated ignorance of the psychology of those he will have to govern."

Ford, in his admirable *Gatherings from Spain*, made the Bible, Shakespeare, and Don Quixote his companions on tour; Sir Richard Burton displaced the Spaniard by Euclid, and he had his three books bound in one tome. In Arabia I prefer the Bible generally, and the book of Job in particular, the Koran and the writings of Lao-Tzū.

It's all a matter of taste. You must also be able to quote the *Traditions* in places, and a study of the local folklore will make you extremely popular.

The women in the Yemen are most interesting. The beauty of those in Sana and Al Jibla is proverbial. Those near Zebid are so captivating that the proverb advises

one "on entering the town of Husaib to put his beasts to the trot!; while the ladies in the highlands of East Sokotra have such charms that a Sokotran thus described them to me: "Their beauty makes you cast down your eyes!" Al Hamadâni puts the matter better, and his description of the attractive power of a beautiful horse will apply equally to a lovely maiden: "When the eye looks up at him, it longs to look him down also, to take in all his beauty."

The women of the hill-country are not veiled. I often visited them in their homes, gave them medical relief, and listened for hours to their minutest grievances. The dancing-girls were frequent visitors. They were unrivalled informants. So were the boys. The Greek proverb says that wine and children speak the truth. As to the veil, I find no distinct sanction in the Koran, not even in Sura xxiv. 31. The veil came over from Persia or India, and only in the large towns of Arabia and with the very highest classes, is it *de rigueur*. The common folk are not to be thus coerced by their husbands,

Arab proverbs are certainly not complimentary to the fair sex. They are compared with shoes, which when old are exchanged for new; and again: "Women are a Satanic conception." The Prophet was chivalrous who said, "Paradise lies at the feet of mothers." The Koran, however, has given them a lower place than men. Schopenhauer, the pessimist, calls them the "*sexus sequior*," and Napoleon was equally precise: "Les femmes n'ont pas de rang." Arab stokers who frequent our English dockyards do often take to themselves white mistresses *pour passer le temps*, but these never return East with their men. I remember a Cardiff woman who had contracted such an alliance, writing to enquire if her husband had any wives in his own country. She sent me a grotesque photo of Haidar Muhammad clad in European clothes and wearing a bowler hat, and she subscribed herself Mrs. Muhammad, in ignorance of the fact that such was the name of her husband's father! I was able to tell her I knew the gentleman, who had a harem of dusky females in his home in Dala.

The band of Danish Mission ladies in Aden are doing a great work in the attempt to ameliorate the home-life, and make the women real helpmeets to their husbands. These ladies work all unobtrusively and unknown, themselves living in the native quarter of the Crater bazar, but their labours will bear fruit, and we owe them our hearty thanks for their lives of self-sacrifice. The work of the Dane, Carl Rasmussen, too, is highly commendable. He has opened a high-grade school for boys in the Crater, with a branch on the Ma'alla Plain, and he is a *persona grata* with all classes of Arabs, who style him "Mu'allim," or the Teacher. He is agent in Aden of the B. & F. Bible Society. Though a Dane, it is England's good name he advertises. I think the women of the Yemen are a step *above* their husbands, the Koran notwithstanding. From the days of Queen Bilkis, history has related the prowess and sagacity of many of the sex. Pre-Islamic poetry knew how to appraise the qualities of woman. I like the sturdy independence and sense of responsibility evinced by Queen Saiyida, who dared tell her lord Al Mukarram that the woman desired for the couch was unfit to hold her place in the Council. She would in these days be a champion of women's rights, with a seat in Parliament.

In the tribal fights the wife follows her husband to battle carrying pitchers of water and reserves of ammunition. Islam in Arabia, *pace* King Husein, will not come into its own so long as women are forced to take an inferior place. The women of Turkey and of India are fast becoming the saviours and regenerators of society.

A Political Officer may be supposed to be engaged solely in politics, but, in our Hinterland, women were among my best friends. Government would have been shocked to know that dancing-girls would dance in my camp—oftentimes in the forenoons—while Tommy Atkins did gather round the walls and applaud the programme. *Dulce est desipere in loco*, and this was just such a place, and it was not only sweet, but politic, both to humour the ladies, who kept me informed of tribal doings, and to enliven the *ennui* of the soldier, who was one of my main

political assets. There are various avenues to knowledge, and the value of what I learnt at these festive gatherings must condone the seeming frivolity of the means to that end.

Shikar and the pursuit of the wily ibex (*wa'al*) in the hills gave me great openings for studying the Arab character. The Arab is almost as nimble as the beast. To watch his agility on the hill-tops was a revelation. The Arab of the hills is a superb animal, and you get to know him best in the open. Richard Jefferies has said that it takes 150 years of outdoor life to make a beauty, and such a life has fashioned the Arab Adonis. Sculptors' models abound. The Arab is a cheery individual, and sings as he works. His trust is in Allah, the Predominant Partner of his life. No Arab would rebuke his God, or wish to change him for another. He would not understand Tilak of India, who told his audience they need no longer fear Brahmâ, Vishnu, or Shiva, who all had become senile and had lost their virility, and they should henceforth adore that deity who alone could extricate man from his difficulties, namely Ganpati. List to the cxii. Sura of *Unity*, one of the most sublime utterances in the book:

> Say: He, Allah, is one.
> Allah the Eternal.
> He begets not, nor is He begotten,
> And none is like to Him.

For the Indian, or, as he is generically termed, the *Hindi*, the Arab has scant respect. He is called contemptuously an "eater of dal (pulse) and rice." About the time of midday prayer an Arab with whom I was talking in my tent suddenly rose to attend the service. His speedy return surprised me, and I asked the cause. "Did you not hear the leader of prayer? (Imam)" he asked. The office was held that morning by an N.C.O. of the Indian Regiment, and his mispronunciation of Arabic, so common with Indians, had caused the other's speedy flight, "for Allah cannot answer prayers thus

wrongly enunciated!" The story recalls the remark of Malherbe, the French stylist, who, when on his death-bed he was receiving the ghostly consolations of the priest, and his promises of coming felicity, exclaimed, "Stop; your ungrammatical style is giving me a distaste for them."

In spite, or because, of the Brotherhood of Islam, the Arab has his social or caste distinctions. He is a stickler for *mîza*, or distinctive rank. A Saiyid almost invariably calls for respect. I found it expedient to honour these gentry, and scarce found I an unworthy member of the cloth. Unworthy members of this community will foster quarrels betwixt tribesmen, and as readily step in to patch them up, for by this craft they get their living. A Saiyid is one by touching whose garments you derive a blessing, or, as they say, one *yatamassah bihi*. As for canonised saints—or *auliya*—the hill-tops testify to their popularity. The greatest of these is Ibn 'Alwân, who is sepulchred in Yafrus, near Ta'izz. This saint ranks second to the Prophet; nay, some there are who in these degenerate times pay him prior honours. The devotees of the saint are styled *magâdhîb*, or those who *drawn by* the magnetism of his sanctity, stroll the country-side belauding his name. Their badge of office is a drum (*tabl*) and a *dabbûs*—or iron stave. Sacrilegious, I once bought these insignia for one dollar. A friendly Arab predicted disaster, and lo! some ten days later I was struck by conjunctivitis, and the countryside rang with the praise of Ibn 'Alwân, who had avenged himself on the infidel's rashness. Another friendly Saiyid made a drastic cure which beggars the cures of Coué! Pronouncing swift words of incantation, the healer dealt me a blow with open palm on the suffering eye, and lo! the next day I saw clearly as before. The Saint had relented, and Arab hierarchy had scored another success. But I digress.

The *'Abd*, or slave class, has the entrée to high society, for his martial prowess demands it. The *Hijri* is a half-breed and lower in the scale. He is mostly a carrier. The strolling classes—*Muzammir*, minstrels; *Shahadh*,

dancers—*Dûshan and Maddâh*, who both of them are of the beggar community and reciters of songs in praise of the Prophet, are on a lower rung. Kabâil, or tribesmen, rank next to the Sâda, and they look down on *ra'âya*, or subjects. A rider on the horse expects the rider on the camel to give the first greeting, and to him the rider on the ass defers. Every rider on a beast is superior to his brother on foot.

The blood-feud is a cherished heritage, fostered " metuo metu aut montibus," as Tacitus expresses it, by mutual distrust or the configuration of the country, intersected by the hills which divide one tribe from its fellow. It has Koranic sanction and therefore cannot become out-of-date. The saying goes, *akhdh al thâr ma hu 'âr*—retaliations preclude disgrace. Hence the never-dying tribal fights which will last " so long as God is worshipped and the crow retains his blackness."

The tribesmen's characters will be readily understood by a study of their proverbs. " Call me Nakib (Governor) and you may cut off my subsistence " ; " A blow on the nose is easier to endure than a breach of custom." These prove the Arab's sense of dignity and his love of conservatism, which is pithily expressed in a verse of the 43rd Sura—" Nay, but we found our Fathers on a set course, and by their footsteps we are surely guided." Innovation is anathema. His independence is refreshing. " Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thousands of years ago." " Not one is demented with the mania of owning things." Like the planets, " each one swims along on his own course," and " every sect is joyfully satiated in his own concerns "—both of Koranic origin. His slogan is that of the horse-leech's daughter —" Give ! Give ! "—but money is never hoarded, although, like the chess-player, he takes all you have and keeps all he can. The poet sings of the " seven Kâfs," or things beginning with the letter " K " which keep out the wet cold of a winter evening, but the Arab's wants are all comprised in the one *Kîs* (or purse), that buys the lot of them. He loves his country and still more his village home, however drab and dull there the

life. "The glory of a horse is in his stable, even if the provender has run short." An Arab returned from Australian gold mines, his vocabulary replete with Australian slang, was content to return to his lonesome village on Jabal Harir, where two or three ancestral fields called for tillage. "The love of one's homeland is one of the articles of faith," but that homeland is strictly separated from the village next-to-hand.

It was Lao Tzū who said: "If a neighbouring state were in sight of mine—nay, if we were close enough to hear our cocks crowing, and dogs barking—the two peoples should grow old and die without mutual intercourse."

Other proverbs: "The skin which is not thy skin, drag it along the market-place" and "Fill my stomach; my Lord will fill the other's." Ford has written of the localism of Spaniards, and this is a trait common to Arabs. It is not, I am an Arab, but I am a Yâfa'i, an 'Aulaki, a Fadli, and so forth.

He is obsessed by the Evil Eye. Jinn-land is ever about him. He pronounces Allah's name before bestriding his camel, for the formula of "Bismillah" will exorcise the Satan that resides in its hump! Jacob, when he sent his sons to buy corn in Egypt, advised them to divide, and enter the city by different gates, and it was the *Eye* that he thought of. The Arab is charming company. His ready wit and humour, his manly outlook on life, his trust in Allah which renders him careless of the morrow—these overshadow his childish and transparent vanity, his Semitic avarice, his lapses into superstition, which make for procrastination in business, and defeat the more practical Western mind; his discounting of the present—he has here no continuing city—and his reliance on the future where he shall meet with Allah.

He is very imitative and an apt coiner of new words. Take, for example, the word *damfala*—he abused, or *damn-fooled*, me; or our word "punctured," which becomes *bankshar*, and is used of a man who has "got the bowler hat." *Dhalik al rajul istawa bankshar!* The word "strafe" suggested the past participle *mastruf*;

the past tense *darzana*—he gave him a *dozen* strokes of the cat. But what shall I more say? The time would fail me to detail all his idiosyncrasies.

Before leaving the Hinterland in 1907 an Arab told me that the ancient writings had predicted the arrival of the Bani 'l Asfar (the Turks) into the Yemen. Their stay would not be long and their successors would swarm over in ships sailing the seas, and would sit in the seats the others had vacated. Their leader would be of the kinship of Hunter, one of the " H-men " I have mentioned in a later chapter. The Yemen is a pleasant place. If I forget thee, O Verdant Yemen, may my right hand forget her cunning! I love its hills and dales, its verdure, yes, and its sandy wastes. Its hill-tops hold the earthly remains of many of the old Patriarchs—" the youthful world's grey fathers in one knot." Here would I like to be laid at rest, and the words of the poet Al Mu'arri ring in my ears:

When comes my time, let me lie pillowed in some corner of the land
Beyond man's ken, my grave unhallowed.

The Yemen is my Cynthia, I the adoring Propertius.
" Cynthia prima fuit; Cynthia finis erit."

## CHAPTER SIX

### HOSTILITIES BETWEEN THE TURKS AND THE IMAM OF SANA, PRIOR TO THE CONCLUSION OF A TRUCE TO COMBAT THE ITALIANS IN 1911

THE Imams of Sana have never felt quite at home in the Yemen since the Turkish régime was re-established there in 1872. In spite of their differing creed the Imams of the Zeidi (Shi'ite) school found it politic to revere the Sultan-Caliph, but they could not fully associate with the Turkish officials sent to their country. Sana itself and its vicinity is the home of Saiyids and Sherifs; their contact with the outer world is slight, and breeds a reserve which savours of fanaticism. Tribesmen, such as the Hâshid and Bakîl, are but little fanatic. I have seldom seen jollier warriors than these Zeidis. The Shâfa'i peoples (Sunni) of the Tihama are a dour lot in comparison. For this, perhaps, the predominance of sun-baked plains must answer. The hills, on the contrary, elevate and purify those who walk on them. It is their geographical bounds that differentiate between the two rival schools rather than the diversities of creed. The sects will mix in one mosque. They will fight in defence of their creeds, true, but just because the love of fighting is imbibed with their mother's milk. "To us men is reserved the fight; to you women the trailing of your skirts." The Arab can show his gentler side. As one of them has said: "Hurtlers on horseback; on alighting we embrace."

The tribesmen of Hâshid and Bakîl are of Hamdân stock. To Hamdân belonged the Zuray'ite dynasty, who held the office of Dâ'i (missioner) at Aden. A former Dâ'i of the Obaydite dynasty of Egypt was Ali al Suleihi, who sprang from the Bani Yâm of Najrân, themselves a subdivision of the Hamdân. The Hâshid and Bakîl clansmen adhere to Zeidi tenets; the Bani Yâm are of



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the Isma'iliya sect. So are the two powerful tribes of the B. Mukâtil and B. Ya'âbir, who inhabit the fastnesses of Harâz, which is twenty days' journey from Nejrân, and on the road from Hodeida to Sana, some half-hour's ride from Menâkha. J. Shibâm is in the heart of the Harâz country, and is its highest peak. The Makârima are the ruling House in Nejrân. They control the B. Yâm. The B. Mukatil and Ya'âbir are ruled by their own Sheikhs, who are generally on bad terms with the Imams of Sana, a fact due to the residence of the Turks. The present Imam is conciliating them, as he will conciliate the entire Yemen, one step at a time.

I do not intend to detail the vicissitudes of the guerilla warfare between Turks and the Imam. The latter's lieutenants came down even to Kataba, twelve miles from our Headquarters at Dala. Aden showed unreasonable alarm. The Arabs could not grasp our apparent insouciance, and asked why, with fighting so close to us, we callously continued our tennis, paper-chases on horseback, and even polo on camel-back. We certainly must be mad! It is this abstraction from immediate surroundings that puzzles the Eastern mind. It imparts an air of mystery to the Briton. It arouses native curiosity. Never to be fully understood is never to be found dull, and never to be found out. Our idiosyncrasies and exclusiveness are, perhaps, one cause of our superiority.

The Sultan of Lahej also was much exercised in 1904–1905 over the success of the Imam's arms. The Abdali's origin is from the Zeidi clan of Arhab. In a letter to Sir Ahmed in 1906 the Imam refers to his addressee's origin from Hamdân, the progenitor of Bakîl. The Sultan's forebears had won their independence in 1728, and this House has been for long years allied to the British Government in Aden. Sir Ahmed affected an anxiety to see the victory of the Turks, whose border with the British had been already fixed, and he had nothing to fear from that quarter. Being a born diplomat, he shortly afterwards concluded a treaty with the Zeidi House of Sana! This alliance, which I discovered in early

1914, had a great deal to do with the Imam's refraining from an active part in the Great War. In 1904 the Imam broadcasted to Aden letters redolent of abuse of the Turkish rule. " They had donned the shirt of tyranny and arrayed themselves with the adornment of rebellion." He accused them of lasciviousness and other unmentionable crimes. He deserted Sana, retiring to Shahâra, in the mountains. His other abodes were at Al Khamir, Al Sûda, and 'Amrân. In 1905 he captured the Turkish garrison of Sana after a long siege, but gave all his prisoners a safe conduct to the coast, keeping their arms and ammunition only, for he had no quarrel with the Turkish troops. Many of these deserted to the Imam, as did the Turkish Commander's own A.D.C.

This incessant warfare had devastated the country. The Imam longed for peace and plenty. His sole aim was the prosperity of the Yemen and the religious welfare of its peoples. He saw no chance of the country's pacification so long as the Sunni and Shi'ite sects were at variance. There was room for them both under one strong Arab ruler. The thirty-two years' occupation of the Yemen by the Turks had kept alive the bickerings of Arab rivals, neither predominating. The presence of the Turks was separating the Arabs.

Imam Yahia, I have said, is an Irredentist, like Mussolini of modern Italy. All praise to the man who would unify his country's needs and secure, at any rate, a transfusion of prejudices. The current phrase in the Yemen to-day is: " Ittafaku'l Shawâfi' an la yattafiku," or, the Shâfa'i sectaries have agreed to differ amongst themselves. A lot of cant is talked about the right of each votary to his creed and country. To his own creed—yes; and the Zeidi is not going to annihilate the Sunni shibboleths. He has more wisdom than one of our General officers in the war, who believed that the only solution of the Arab question was to destroy their creed! The Arab's creed is one thing; his country, which the Sunni, thanks to the quarrels in his ranks, cannot control, is another. The Yemen has long awaited the advent of the Strong Man. He has arrived, and will bring order out of chaos,

*if we keep our hands off.* It is not we who can settle the metes and bounds of the conflicting sects. A strong Arab of the country can. The Turks, who lived in the country, were able to keep order, but they naturally lacked a full and sympathetic knowledge of the Arab. He had enough to fill his mind elsewhere. He was not so much irreligious as *Pro-Turk.* Being a Moslem, he believed he could make the Arab into a good Turk. I think this has been our mistake in India. Alexander the Great told Aristotle he would conquer the East and transform the peoples into good Macedonians. His tutor had warned him of a relapse into Eastern ways. You cannot, however, make an Arab into anything else without defacing the original. This again we have seen in India. It is said, "An Englishman italianate is a devil incarnate." The reverse is equally true. The Koran renders it: "Kullun y'amalu 'ala shâkilatihi"—every one should act as nature bids him. I have said on a previous page that the Turk better than anyone else knew how to govern Arabs, but, then, the good is the enemy of the best.

*Alterius non sit qui suus esse potest.* It is independence that the Arab craves.

The Imam wrote to our King to gain his sympathy. No reply was given, for we were scrupulously careful not to appear partial. The Turks believed we had tutored the Imam's rebellion. It was currently bruited in the country that our Sultan of Lahej was remitting money to the Zeidi. After all, the Lahej Sultan is an Arab, and blood is thicker than water. The Arab proverb is more expressive: "The hand is thine own even if it is leprous."

It is true that the Prophet aimed to form a united religious and political society to replace the jurisdiction of the various Arab clans, and the Koran has said: "The noblest of you in God's sight is he who is most pious"; and again, "The believers are all brethren." This arrangement would include the Moslem Turk as one of the fold, but "the cult of the tribesman"—*Al Kabyala*—is conservative, and the Koran aptly expresses Arab

dissidence: "Nay we found our Fathers on a set course, and by their footsteps are we surely guided" (K. xliii. 22). In the Yemen, tribal sanction has often superior weight, and will correct or test the dicta of the Koran.

Our failure to reply to his letter gave umbrage to the Imam. In another direction we did help the Imam greatly if unconsciously. He had ordered from England, through an Aden firm, his own minting-machine. It is a Sovereign alone who mints coinage, and the sovranty of the Yemen was to the Turks, who were incensed. The machine arrived, manifested as something else! Only after the camel-caravan had left Aden far behind did we learn the nature of the goods and the destination. Messages were despatched for its recall, but it was too late. The Turks sent out troops to intercept the caravan, but it arrived, thanks to Allah, by a circuitous route. The route taken by the caravan, which was escorted by 500 tribesmen, was Dala, Mures, Damt, Reshan al Tibn, al Shem, and al 'Aud. The offending firm I cautioned; the Imam expressed his gratefulness to the Aden Government; and the Turks were confirmed in their belief of British treachery! The Sultan of Lahej had aided the passage of the caravan. I complained that his action would prejudice our relations with the Turks. He affected surprise at our friendship with the Turks, but thanked me for my courtesy in putting this fact before him.

The Imam keenly felt his isolation in the Yemen. He wrote he was "like a white spot on the hide of a black camel!"

It is necessary to learn the origin and the tenets of this and other Shi'ite sects.

On the accession of the Abbasid Caliph al Ma'mûn (of whose Caliphate the learned writer Syed Ameer Ali says "that it constitutes the most glorious epoch in Saracenic history and has been justly called the Augustan age of Islam"), the missionaries of the Talibites appeared, says Ibn Khaldun, and proclaimed in Irak the supremacy of Muhammad, the elder son of Ibrahim Tabataba, son of Isma'il, son of Ibrahim, son of Hasan II, son of Hasan,

son of Ali, the fourth Caliph. Muhammad was killed, and Jafar al Sâdik's son Muhammad was proclaimed in the Hijaz. In the Yemen, a rebellion was unsuccessful. The Caliph al Ma'mûn sent troops there who subdued that province, and large numbers of the Yemen notables were deported. Of these, one Ibn Ziyad propitiated the Caliph and was sent back to the Yemen as Governor. He conquered the Yemen lowlands and founded the city of ZABID as his capital. He then became master of the entire Yemen, and his authority was recognised even at Sana, where still existed the Bani Ya'fur, the descendants of the Himyar dynasty. Ibn Ziyad died, and, after two successors, came the long reign of Abu 'l Jaish. He, hearing of the assassination of the Caliph al Mutawakkil, the abdication of Al Musta'in, and the subjection of the Caliphate to Turkish freedmen, discontinued the payment of tribute to Baghdad and assumed kingly airs. During his reign a Hasani Sherif Al Hadi ila'l Hakk Yahya, son of Husein, son of AL KASIM al Rassi, son of Ibrahim Tabataba, arose in the Yemen and proclaimed the supremacy of the Zeidis. This Yahya had returned from Sind, whither his grandfather Al Kasim had fled to avoid his arrest by the order of Al Mansur, after his brother Muhammad had been killed, as above stated. This is Ibn Khaldun's story, but is not substantiated. On his return to the Yemen, Yahya went to Sa'da. His followers gave him the style of IMAM. This is the Rassid dynasty, so called after his grandfather. This Zeidi dynasty has continued to the present day, although Sada has been displaced by SANA, as aforesaid.

The adherents of the Caliph Ali are divided into several Shi'ite sects. These include the Zeidis, the Dodekites, and the Ismailites. The Zeidis disagree with the other two on the question of the rightful holder of the Imamate. All recognise Ali, his two sons Hasan and Husein, and perhaps Ali's grandson, Ali Zein al 'Âbidîn. After him, whilst their opponents recognise his youngest son Muhammad al Bâkir, the Zeidis give the succession to al Bâkir's brother Zeid, the founder of their sect, who was succeeded by his son Yahya.

The Ismailites seceded from the Dodekites upon the death of al Bâkir's son Ja'far al Sâdik, the sixth Imam. Ja'far's son Isma'il died before his father, but the Ismailites hold that the latter was the seventh Imam, and that the succession passed on to his son Muhammad al Maktum, from whom the Mahdi 'Ubeid Allah, founder of the Fatimite Caliphate, claimed descent.

As to the Zeidis, these are not agreed as to Yahya's successor. Some hold that he was followed by his brother 'Isa, while others insist that before his death Yahya bequeathed his office to Muhammad *al Nafs al Zakiya*, thus transferring the Zeidi Imamate from the family of Husein to that of Hasan. Some allege that this Muhammad was followed by his younger brother Ibrahim, and others that his successor was his elder brother IDRIS, the originator of the Idrisi Dynasty of Fez in Africa. Yet again are found those who hark back to the Huseini branch and give precedence to yet another Muhammad, son of Al Kasim, son of Ali, son of Umar al Ashraf, the eldest brother of that Zeid who originated the Zeidi sect. It is important to note these details, for it may explain the belief on the part of the modern Idrisi Saiyid of Sabia (in 'Asîr) that he has an inherent right to dispute the possessions of his great rival, the Imam of Sana. The Idrisi's ancestors, however, early emigrated to Africa, and were lost sight of in the Yemen.

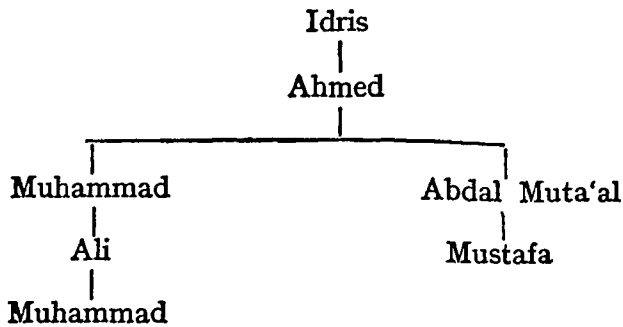
It is easy to understand King Husein's rooted objection to the Yemen upstart Idrisi Saiyid. Both Husein and the Idrisi are of the branch of Hasan.

The following is a short sketch of the Idrisi's stock given me by an Aden notable.

Idris fled to the Maghrib from the wrath of the Abbasid Abu Ja'far al Mansur. There his seed spread and his kingdom was established. He was brother to Muhammad styled The Mahdi, or *Al Nafs al Zakiya*. Idris himself was a son of Abdallah al Kamil, son of Hasan II, son of Hasan al Sabt, son of Ali bin Abi Talib. Muhammad *Al Nafs al Zakiya* was acknowledged Caliph by his brother (?) Hashim, and his election was favoured by the Abbasid al Mansur. Hashim fought in Medina against

*Al Nafs al Zakiya*, who got the support of the townspeople but was killed in the fight.

Saiyid Muhammad bin Ali, the Amir of Sabia, traces his descent from Idris I, and from the Ashrâf of the West, especially those of Fas (Fez), Miknas, and Marâkish (Morocco). Muhammad the Idrisi is son of Ali, son of Muhammad, son of Ahmed, son of Idris, and is styled the Idrisi after the later Idris. Saiyid Mustafa, now of Luzor, is a son of Abdal Muta'âl, son of Ahmed, son of Idris. Abdul Muta'âl and Muhammad, the grandfather of Muhammad b. Ali. the (late) Idrisi ruler, were brothers, and so Mustafa was a cousin of Ali, and uncle of Saiyid Muhammad bin Ali the Idrisi, according to the tree here appended:




The Imam of Sana is usually accepted as of Hasan's branch, but he prides himself upon his origin from Zeid the Huseini, and this is his true descent. King Husein of the Hijaz, and the House of Sana, are usually on friendly terms. Their origin is distinct, and so one cause of jealousy is absent. In point of fact, the Zeidi Imams since the days of al Kasim al Rassi have been chosen from the families of both Hasan and Husein, and although Zeid the Huseini was the immediate progenitor of the Zeidi House, it was al Kasim, and later on al Hadi Yahya, both of Hasani stock, that consolidated the House and furnished its chief support. It is hardly necessary to add that the offspring of al Hasan are styled *Sherif*, while a Saiyid is a scion of al Husein. They are of equal

sanctity. The priestly descendants of the union of Ali, and one other than Fatima, are styled Alid Saiyids. They abound in the Hadramaut, where their influence is great, as is their fanaticism.

As regards the several tenets of the Imamates—the Dodekites (or Ithna 'Ashâriya, because they recognise *twelve* Imams, the last of whom is still expected)—and the Ismailites, both argue that Ali secured the office solely in virtue of his personality; that his descendants have followed a regular succession; and that no human right exists to withstand his or their claims. These two sects, therefore, disown the Caliphates of Abu Bakr and Umar. The Zeidis, on the other hand, maintain that Ali was appointed, not because of his individuality, but in virtue of his peculiar merits, and so the right of selection is confined to the progeny of Fatima. Very strait conditions are required of one seeking the Zeidi Imamate. A facial blemish will penalise the candidate. One of the leading Sherifs of the Imam's entourage has the *Kunya*, or patronymic, of Abu Naib, for a prominent *tooth* disfigures his face, and spoils his hopes of candidature, in spite of otherwise pre-eminent claims. The Zeidis do not recognise the twelve Imams, though they venerate the first four, namely, Ali, Hasan, Husein, and Ali Zein al 'Âbidîn. Unlike the Shâfa'i, or Sunni school, they lay no store by the cupolas over a buried saint. They, however, pay reverence to the tomb of their founder Al Hadi Yahya, who is buried at S'ada, his death due to poison.

The Zeidi Imam takes the style of *Amir al Muminin*, or Commander of the Faithful. The Turks forbade this title, and for a time the Imam complied. The legend is inscribed on his seal, which is red. His letters are sprinkled with red ochre to show he has succeeded to the throne of the old Himyaritic Princes of the province, whose House-flag was red, and their name indicates this colour.

I have detailed in chapter iv. the programme of the Arab Party in Paris, and the Imam himself issued his manifestos. He wrote that blindness had fallen on Arabia. Its peoples were humiliated and degraded, and

God had revealed to him, Yahya, the road to their emancipation. He cited an array of Koranic texts to substantiate his calling. Allah would prove the people of the Yemen by setting up that cursed brood of 'Ajam, that is *non*-Arabs, who reject the Book of God, and the traditions of His Prophet, and had legalised a religion lacking Divine sanction. They had authorised things illegal, such as the use of fermented liquors, fornication, and other worse immoralities. In spite of all this, the Arabs had given the enemy assistance, to their own detriment, and had suffered a just Nemesis. It was well that the Arabs had seized the Turkish arms, or otherwise their insouciance had enslaved their children's children. God had timely opened the Arabs' eyes. The Imam referred to the Turkish disasters in their campaign against Ibn Sa'ud of NEJD, and in other fields, which had considerably reduced their enemies' numbers. He rebuked the Yemen folk who should have chased away the Turks, and reduced them to the oblivion that befel the once haughty people of 'ÂD. God was before and behind the Arabs, if haply their eyes were opened to see. The Arabic style of Imam Yahya's letters is magnificent. More than any other Arab Potentate is he a master of language, and the subtleties of saj'a—the rhymed prose of the Koran. The language of the Yemen lowlands is corrupt, like the patois of Egypt and Syria. In Egypt I often recalled the Psalmist in lxxxi. 5—" the land of Egypt, where I heard a language that I understood not." The maritime towns of Arabia must necessarily speak a mixed tongue. Aden itself is no exception, and the dialect of Hodeida is tempered by words of Turkish and African origin.[1] As you get up into the hills of the Yemen the language becomes purer. The Hijaz dialects are very mixed. Perhaps in Nejd does one find Arabic at its best. It is in districts like the Yemen, where newspapers are not printed, and the press of Egypt scarcely ever enters, that the folk are thrown back solely on the

[1] An anomaly of the dialect about Hodeida, is the use of the feminine gender when addressing males: e.g. *antunna* for *antum*. It recalls the Italian " ella."

Koran and the Arab poets, and hence the purity of their style.

It was the Arabs' inability to combine that rendered the Imam's plea a cry in the wilderness. It was this that paved the way to the Turkish occupation of the Yemen in 1872. I have known a tribe "A" to be at warfare with tribe "B." Both sides sent off emissaries to enlist tribe "C," who split up and joined both "A" and "B." Only a few shots were fired, and "C" decamped to return to its proper pastures. The Imam had several successes. His forces entrenched themselves on one occasion in the plateau belonging to the tribe of B. Zuhair to the East of Sana, and there awaited their opportunity. As the Turks advanced, they retreated and continued these Fabian tactics, drawing Feizi Pasha further and further from his base. The Imam's General then despatched a body of 15,000 warriors to cut off their retreat and to intercept all communications with Sana, and with his main army of 50,000 launched a frontal attack on the enemy force of 45,000 who were disorganised by disease and lack of provisions, while their morale had vanished. The Arab victory was complete. Trying to retreat on Sana, Feizi Pasha was confronted by the 15,000 whom the Imam had detached to cut off his retreat. The Pasha struck a course in the direction of 'Amrân. He arrived after serious disasters, and his army was reduced by two-thirds of its numbers. He called for reinforcements from home to relieve his isolation. By a supreme effort he regained Sana, where his garrison was beleaguered. The Imam was greatly helped by the continual stream to the coast of Turkish deserters. These came also to Dala, and their condition was desperate. I sent them down in batches to Aden. Turkish ladies were among the sufferers who trekked downwards through Dala. I remember helping certain Turkish ladies whom I found on the roadside weeping over the high-handed action of an underling of the Amir of Dala. I released their mules, restored their confiscated property, and sent them under escort to the coast. Shortly afterwards I received a courteous letter in French from the

Governor-General of the Yemen, Izzet Pasha, thanking me profusely for what I had done.

At another time I discovered the Circassian wife of a Turkish General, himself killed, as she sheltered in the Amir's fort of Sanâh, which lies on the border between Dala and Kataba. She was attended by a solitary servant, and she carried her husband's sword. She was suffering from elephantiasis and could not walk. A camel-litter carried her to my hospital in Dala, where she stayed for two months till cured. She left the hospital only to be captured by the Amir, who added her to his harem. I released her and put her across the border.

The Turks sent up huge reinforcements to Sana, and with their troops were many Albanians. Riding one day into Kataba to call on the Turkish General, I saw a crowd of Turkish soldiers who were belabouring an officer for holding back their pay. The Turks were badly paid and in arrears, and I wonder how they fought at all. Their troops were mainly from the Syrian battalions. I had taken some of my mounted escort, and we were laden with boxes of the *Scissors-brand* cigarettes, which we distributed to the soldiers. One of these, much impressed with the free gifts, said: "You have done more for us in ten minutes than our officers have done for us in as many months." The war was not popular with the Turkish rank and file, and many of them disliked fighting against their co-religionists. Hence the desertions.

The Imam wrote copiously to Sultan Sir Ahmed Fadl of Lahej. He revelled in the Jihad he was directing, and quoted the rhyming saw that God had made lovely in his eyes the Jihad which had become as necessary to him as water and food: *Kad habbab Allah ilaina 'l jihâd; hatta sâr kathâlith al ma' wa'l zâd.* The Arab truly does not live by bread alone! The Jihad has Divine sanction.

Famine was rife and locusts swarmed. The starvelings streamed across the border. With them came a number of courtesans, the result of destitution. Such women are rarely seen in the Yemen. The villages around Dala

were soon overstocked. A deputation of Sheikhs visited me, asking permission to dislodge the women. I told them that was their concern. They believed I was catering for the pleasure of British troops! When I refuted this calumny, they retired joyously, saying they were capable of doing the next thing.

Our own Protégés became restless. A universal Jihad was believed imminent, if the Imam's cause proved victorious and his forces came south. A nameless fanatic came to the villages near Dala and preached to the masses. He was styled *al Majnun*, or one possessed by Jinns. This word carries no obloquy. Allah has allowed the Jinn to obsess one. He was harboured by a notable Saiyid, who refused to comply with the Amir's summons to Dala so long as the Nasâra (Christians) were there. Amir Shâîf's forbears were Imamic viceroys. He now, through fear of an avenging Imam, coming back into his own, favoured the Turks, whose presence in his country had called the British up in 1902. The Imamic House of Dala was at heart "pro-Turk." Were not both he and the Turks Moslems? Al Majnun was allowed to settle on J. Harir, in our vicinity. Here the Amir's son Nasr treated him hospitably, though the hill-people objected to his importunities. The majority of Arabs, however, were not anti-British. Our stay in Dala had popularised us and our methods. A head man of the Nawi tribesmen, within the Turkish border, told me he hated the Imam, but liked the Turks with certain qualifications. We were the milch-cow which must be preserved; the Turks were devourers; while the Imam was "*barrâh*," or like the cyclone which drives all before it. Influential Sherifs from Al Jauf had a high opinion of the Sultan-Caliph, but stigmatised his officers as corrupt. The Turks, they said, drank liquor, and they hoped the Imam would expel them from the country. People often talk as if Islam was summed up in the sentence, "Thou shalt not drink." The creed is rather one of positive injunctions, and other and negative articles of faith are accretions. These lower the Moslem's ideal, but do not deprive him of the badge of Islam. The Sherifs insisted that the

Imam's aim was not to oust the temporal rule of the Turks so long as they stood to the "Sunna" of the Prophet. It was not so much independence he craved, as his right to dispense spiritual favours. The Imam was strong and feared none. He might not be able to emulate foreign Powers, but he had a grip on "Allah's rope," and that was the one thing needful. This recalls a day in Aden. My small son had invited to tea a son of the Sultan of Lahej. Young Abdul Hamid enquired of his more youthful host his stock of Arabic lore, which was comprised in the ejaculation *Alhamdu lillah!* (Praise be to Allah!) "Ah!" rejoined the princeling, "if you know that, you know all." Give the Arab his God, throw in a rifle, multitudinous cups of coffee, and his "*Kat*"-leaf, and he is supremely happy! Arabs choose proper names for an end. Abdul Hamid was so called after the Caliph. His father hoped for the freedom of the Turkish town of Kataba, ten miles from our Dala border.

The folk of Al Jauf were impressed with our British ways, and would cultivate friendly relations. They had a *hisba*, or astrological calculation, which presaged the displacement of Turks by English. Moslems should not strive, they said, and yet all was "*mukaddar*," or decreed. When I reminded them they lodged beyond our political ken, that we were friends to both belligerents, and could not interfere, they were satisfied. Another party from the Turkish province of JUBAN told me that the struggle between Turks and Imam was of vast import; the side worsted would never recover.

Juban further said that his ancestors were originally of the Zeidi persuasion, but he himself was now a Shâfa'i. To a query of mine as to his relations with the Zeidi ruler of Sana, whose tenets he had abjured, he replied, "How should I not love him? But as to the Turks, you cannot love one who flogs you. *Dhi yalbajak ma tahibbuhu.*"

Abdul Rahman b. Husein, the Sheikh of the ancient town of Saba (or Ma'rib), whence travelled the Queen of

Sheba to prove the wisdom of Solomon, said that while Allah was one Sultan of his territory, he himself was another. To my query who was his Caliph he replied, "Every one is his own Caliph"; and then, as I smiled, incredulous, he shyly added, "Perhaps it is the Sultan of Rûm (Turkey)!" He told me of the wonders of the "Bahr al Sâfi"[1] a region of shifting-sand-dunes, and, grasping figuratively in his hand the Turkish people, he exclaimed, "May Allah overwhelm them in that ocean of sand!"

The Sherif of Behan, Ahmed Am Mohsin, one of our Protégés, was lucid in his relative appraisement of Turks and the Imam. Putting his hand to his head he exclaimed, "From this point and above I am pro-Turk; from my heart downwards I am with the Imam." So this Sunni protagonist had a regard for the Zeidi (Shi'ite) Imam. It is all a matter of blood. With his heart he favoured the Arab; his intellect told him it was the safer policy to put his money on the Turk. This recalls the dictum of the Caliph Ali, who was describing his two sons. "Al Hasan was like the Prophet in all parts between chest and head; and Al Husein in all below that part!"

I often wondered how much of the Arab's denunciation of the Turks was due to his wish to ingratiate himself with us. Much of what an Arab says you quietly accept, ram it into your pipe, and smoke it!

In the previous chapter I have mentioned the machinations in Paris of the Arab League. One of the Turkish Kaimakams had strong views on the Arab question. He and I were on excellent terms after he made careful enquiries as to my rank and office. The Grand Vizier advised him not to court my friendship, but, if I called, to show me courtesy. I called, and he often visited me in Dala, where he would come to shop on a market day. We would pledge each other in mugs of champagne as we sat, smoked, and chatted in my tent. He dined with me, too, in the Mess of the Rifle Brigade, and was very good

[1] This region of Bahr Al Safi resembles in some measure the Rann of Cutch in India. Near to it, at Al Juwan, are a people, the Ahl Ba Dhela, of whom many are said to be born with one arm only—the right. They eat unmilled grains, and their huts are covered with skins.

company in the early hours of the morning. One day in May, 1905, he confided to me his secret, which was the coming revolution and the creation of an Arab Caliph. Four years later the young Turks carried it out, and on 10th May, 1909, Abdul Hamid II gave way to Muhammad Reshad V.

The Kaimakam argued thus: The Arab movement was no disorganised revolt as the Turks did vainly prate. The tribes of the Yemen of old had supremacy over all other Arabs, and they remained to-day very jealous of their ancient lineage. The time was coming when all Islam would foregather under their leadership. Islam was gradually coming into its own. Even the Christian youths of Syria recognised the Koran as an international treatise and not merely the text-book of Islam. Its precepts they memorised, and they were in sympathy with the aims of the Arab nation. A racial reunion was in the air. The Imam Yahya, he continued, held strong views on the Caliphate, which was the prerogative of a scion of Ali and Fatima. Turks, during the past thirty or forty years, had been looking afield to win the freedom of the East. The Kaimakam said it was his religious duty to serve to bring about the success of these revolutions, and to encourage the Zeidis of the Yemen to throw over the Turkish yoke and win through to freedom. This was a sacred duty owed to humanity. Turkey by her blind policy was losing her provinces in Europe, Asia, and Africa, and Turkish rule was heading for annihilation. Had the Turkish régime been as liberal as that of other Powers to their Moslem subjects, the present *impasse* in the Yemen would not have been. This Turkish official had great sympathy with the British, and his aim was to join the Imam, and encourage him to enter on a treaty of amity with the British Government. The Imam would require trusty counsellors to initiate reforms, and it was *his* rule alone that would secure autonomy in the province.

My friend was a Young Turk and aired that Party's views. He made capital of the help given by many Turks to this cause, and yet would eliminate the Turkish

Caliphate. Here, I think, lay the weakness of his programme. The better way was to have brought Turks and Arabs together by a new and liberal policy, and so to have kept Islam united under the ægis of Turkey. It was no revolution, but evolution, that the Yemen needed.

We, too, at that time erred in regarding the Imam as a rebel. We had ignored the history of the Yemen. Our intervention was, I know, impossible, but some sympathy evinced for the Arab cause would not have violated the bounds of strict neutrality.

The Arabs had a sure word of prophecy as to British ascendancy. It was given me by the Sheikh of Turkish Juban, who wrote: "There is an ancient prediction that the might of the *Ahl Farang* (here the British) shall cover the earth as the mist enshrouds the hill-tops. Their forces shall subdue the East and the shores of the sea, and shall ascend even to the *Beit al Mukdis*, or Jerusalem." The seer's dream came true later under Maude, Marshall, and Allenby, whose name was ingeniously interpreted as *Allah wa Nabi*—God and His Prophet.

Muhammad Ali Pasha, the Governor-General, approached the Imam in 1906 to negotiate a peace, but he was foiled. The Imam was a conservative upholder of Koranic sanctions. He would cut off a hand for theft, and mutilate the adulterer. The Turk argued for humaner ideals based on a civilised code. The Imam quoted the Koran v. 4, which is said by some to have been the last revelation made to the Prophet, who died 81 days later. Its testimony to a Moslem is convincing: "This day have I perfected for you your religion, and my choice for you is Al Islam." How, asked the Imam, could mortal men oppose Allah and truckle to a man-made code?

I have already mentioned the activities of Sherif Husein of Mecca to stop hostilities. He, with the Sultan of Lahej and Izzet Pasha, brought matters to a successful issue. This they did by arranging an accommodation of the various interests. They united the Arab and the Turk in May, 1911. The *Arab League* received a

setback. In March, 1911, the Sherif wrote to Sir Ahmed of Lahej that Izzet Pasha had arrived with strong forces and was bent on restoring order in the Yemen; that the Government had asked him to take part against the Idrisi Pretender in the highlands and lowlands of 'Asîr; that "our Honourable Brother the exalted Chief of Lahej" should address Imam Yahya and dissuade him from further hostilities against the Porte, for by studying the aims of Islam his own ends would be more easily attained. If he declined, his destruction was near—"Two bow-lengths, or yet nearer" (Koranic). The Government would make no more mistakes. The Sherif also wrote directly to the Imam, extolling the virtues of Izzet Pasha, who would settle matters amicably in the interests of Islam. He reminded the Imam of his high calling, and, while admitting the cogency of many of his arguments, said it was disastrous at that critical time to divide Islam. It was the duty of every Moslem to strengthen the Caliph of Islam, "even by a camel's fettering-rope," and criminal to fritter away his strength on a "side-show," and that against his co-religionists. This blood-shedding must surely displease Yahya's great-grandfather, the Prophet.[1] The Sherif added that he himself was about to start for Asir to suppress the Idrisi rising.

Sir Ahmed at once replied to the Sherif's note. He rejoiced to hear of the proceedings against the Idrisi, and he promised to address the Imam. He was relieved to hear that the victorious army of the Porte had re-entered Sana, but unless the Turkish Commander stayed there the strife would be renewed. He was anxious lest the Turks should advance still further North into the Imam's country, for this would arouse the Zeidi tribesmen and the war would spread through the Yemen. He was careful to remind the Sherif of the peculiarities of the Zeidi folk, and added what reads like a "bull": "Should all in that country become extinct save only two Zeidis—a male and a female—these would insist on electing

[1] Descendants of Al Hasan and Al Husein are all one, as here tacitly confessed.

a successor from the Imam's family." Zeidi troubles would cease only with the extinction of that family. The better plan was for Turks and Imam to compromise, and Sir Ahmed believed no more competent mediator existed than the addressee.

The Turco-Sherifian action against the Idrisi and the tactful mediation of Izzet Pasha had driven a wedge between any possibility of an Imamo-Idrisi entente.

Following up his first letter to Sir Ahmed, the Sherif wrote yet another. The Turks complained that arms and ammunition were being imported into the nine cantons of the Aden Protectorate, and the object was to strengthen the Imam in his contumacy. They believed this was the work of the "Amir of Lahej," whom the Sherif had eulogised as a well-wisher to the Porte, whereas his acts belied him. The Sherif had immediately cleared his friend's reputation, and gave instances of his friendship with and adherence to the Sublime Government. The Sherif naïvely added: "I trust I have appraised your attitude in its true light, and that your future acts may refute their suspicions, for the time calls for extreme caution, and it is of all importance to unite Islam with the Turkish Caliphate." Sir Ahmed replied in high dudgeon. He swore by Allah and the *Traditions* that his sympathies were with the Turkish Government, but he added humorously: "May God deal with their officials as they deserve." Had he not striven in the past to bring together Turks and Imam, to check bloodshed, and to prevent a split in Islam? None but an idiot would have accused him of putting arms into the country, for he and the Aden authorities were one in stopping the importation, and this was known to all both near and afar. To assure the Sherif the Sultan sent copies of the correspondence that had passed between himself and Muhammad Ali Pasha, the Governor-General. These related to suggestions made for controlling the traffic in firearms, and for effecting peace between Imam Yahya and the Turks. So we see even such an one as the Lahej Sultan dealing direct with the Turks! This was due to our retreat from Dala four years before. The

Turks, as I had pointed out in 1910, had declined to refer to Aden their complaints against tribes on our side of the border, alleging our inability to settle them. As an Arab said to me in 1906 when our regression was mooted: "So long as the white canvas (tents) remain standing none can do any mischief"; and again, "The snake is still a snake even if its slough only you see." All this meant that it was essential that our standing camp should remain, to prove that our retreat was only temporary. The wiser heads amongst the Arabs saw the unwisdom of a move down to Aden. The Abdali Sultan himself in 1910 advocated our return, and once more urged the construction of a railway as far as Lahej, his capital, which might be extended thereafter as occasion demanded. He prophesied a loss of our prestige unless we showed ourselves from time to time within our Protectorate. The railway would have helped him to control the predatory Subehi tribesmen, for whose good conduct *we held him responsible.* Unrest on the trade-routes seriously affected his trade and ours at Aden. Government was unable to traverse the policy laid down in 1907, which had evicted us "bag and baggage" from the Hinterland, and had prescribed the rule of non-intervention in Arab affairs.

The Arabs, however, had sucked no small advantage from our stay in their midst. *Man ta'am al hâli dandal mushâfirahu*—"who has once tasted sweetness, thrusts out his lips for more." 'Twas Oliver asking for more. They craved our sympathy and our advice and journeyed in to get it. They got also, what was impossible up-country, medical treatment at the hands of that G.O.M. of Sheikh Othman—Dr. John Cameron Young, who has ever been a great asset to us in Aden. The policy of non-intervention was thereby tempered. It is possible for those at a distance to frame a broad principle; its execution must necessarily be tempered by those on the spot. "Those who play by rule will never be more than tolerable players."

In 1910 the London *Times* had an article on our increasing interest in Arabia. Officially we had been

advocating a programme of insouciance! The Cairo paper *al Muaiyad* commented thereon that it was incumbent on all "who pronounce the letter 'dād'"—i.e. Arabs—to ponder the British view. The English, it said, were playing a dangerous game, and its evil results would fall on the Ottoman Government and on Arabia generally. Arabia must watch England's ambition and safeguard its own rights. The Turks were busy in Europe combating Greek ambitions and the self-conceit of the Cretans, and the Arabs should stop fighting the Turks and checkmate foreign intrigues in their own country. Izzet Pasha the Governor-General of the Yemen acted promptly on this advice. He was not only a good soldier, but also a first-class administrator. His eloquence attracted the Imam. His largesse added the finishing touch. He was arraigned thereafter by his superiors for the vast doles he had paid. His munificence recalled that of Hatim al Tai, and proved a godsend to the Porte. The Turks owed very much to his tact and ready resource.

The Imam of Sana had decreed that three of his lieutenants should be beheaded after the Pasha's victorious entry into Sana. These were pardoned after the eloquent pleading of one of them: "Did you not, O Sire, tell us to take from them such alms as may purify them? We fought the Turks as long as we could, and now have taken of them as much as we could! We are ready to listen to your next command."

A "Pro-Turk" Arab commentator said that the present policy of liberal largesse would aggravate the cupidity of the Arabs, and encourage further rebellions in hope of favours, and the result would be a continual massacre of brave Turks. A Cairo paper had urged the Turks to emulate the British at Aden, whose magnet had been their prodigality of purse!

The Turco-Imam pact was concluded in May, 1911. On the 13th *idem* the Idrisi cut the telegraph lines to Salif. Saiyid Mustafa, the Idrisi General, was hotly besieging the capital of 'Asîr—ABHA—having occupied SHAAR, where he netted a number of Turkish prisoners and some guns. These were taken to his capital of

SABIA. I have mentioned in the fourth chapter the relief of ABHA, and the story of this campaign will be found in a treatise called *Al Rahlatu'l Yamânîya*, written by a Meccan Sherif, Abdul Muhsin al Barakati.

I now come to the Turco-Imam pact, which marked the flood-tide of Turkish predominance in the Yemen. The ebb-tide started with the war against Italy, which for the time seemed to strengthen Turkey's position. The Balkan war followed, and then the Armageddon of 1914. 'Twas a neap-tide now. The Arab moon was in the ascendancy. The Turkish sun had set.

. . . . . .

"And thus did We show Abraham the kingdom of the heavens and the earth . . . with the darkling of the night he saw a star and said, 'Is this my Lord?' When it set, he said, 'I love not the setting ones'" (Koran, *The Cattle*, vv. 76 and 77).

# CHAPTER SEVEN

## THE TURCO-IMAMIC PACT OF MAY, 1911, AND THE ITALO-TURKISH WAR OF 1911–1912

THE persuasive powers of Izzet Pasha had won over the Imam of Sana. A *Tradition* tenders this advice: *Tahâddû tahâbbû*—mutual friendships are secured by mutual gifts. In this case the Turks gave money, and the Imam gave, what was still better, his allegiance to Islam against the Italian.

Izzet Pasha came to Daan, in the hilly tracts between the Hashid country and the Forts of Al Sud and 'Amrân. He was a fully-accredited envoy from the Porte. An agreement was made of which the main articles were as follows:

The Imam was to have exclusive disposal of all cases in the Sana district; in the outlying districts of 'Amrân, Hajja, Kaukaban, Harâz (excepting S'afân and the B. Mukâtil), in 'Anis, Dhamâr, Yarîm, and Radâ'. In the case of those Zeidis living in Ta'izz, whose numbers exceeded one-half of the entire population, suits were to be decided in conformity with the Zeidi tenets. The Appellate Courts were to be composed of a President and Members elected by the Imam, and their decisions were subject to the confirmation of the Porte. On a question involving the *Lex talionis*, if the Appellate Court passed capital sentence on a murderer, it was optional for the judge to ask the heirs of the murdered man to grant a pardon on consideration of blood-wit paid to them. If these were obdurate, the Court should refer the matter to Stamboul and ask sanction to carry out the demands of the law; and it was considered that the terms of the *Iradè* should not exceed a period of four months from the despatch of the Appellate Court's judgment.

There are verses scattered here and there throughout

the Koran prescribing the working of this law of retaliation, " in which is your security for life." It is a *law*, and we may gather from a study of the verses as a whole that it was not left to private individuals to take the law into their own hands. It was a matter for the Courts. Modern Islam in the Yemen does not always take this view, and so far from the next-of-kin retaliating on the murderer, any member of the murdered man's tribe will avenge his *tribe* by slaying any one of the murderer's tribesmen whom he may chance to meet. The proverb goes: *Al gharīm wa illa ibn 'ammihi*—" The guilty person, or, failing him, his cousin." The word *cousin* gives the Moslem a range of action surpassing the wildest conceptions of a Scot.

A suit between a Zeidi and one of another creed (excepting the hill-men) should be transferred to a mixed tribunal of Zeidi and Hanafi judges.

The management of endowed property was left in the hands of the Imam.

The circle of J. al Shark, which is a dependency of the 'Ânis district, and comprises the *'uzla* of J. al Shark, B. Tashyîb, B. As'ad, Al Manâr, B. Khâlid, and B. Suweid, should be exempt from taxation for a period of ten years.

These were the main provisions. The document was dated 27 Shawwal 1329=7 Tashrin Awwal 1327. It was expressly stipulated that this agreement should be ratified by the Sublime Porte. Writing of this pact to his friend, Sir Ahmed of Lahej, Imam Yahya styles him " the fruit of the plant of our illustrious ancestors, who is considered of us and to us," and adds, " Ourselves and our successors shall preserve the dignity of his sultanate and render them all necessary co-operation." He then goes on to tell him: " The treaty concluded, we, irrespective of doctrinal diversities, turned our thoughts to the unity of Islam, and to resist the aggressions of foreigners, in case Italy persists in wrongdoing in Tripoli." The Imam sent to Lahej a number of complimentary presents, which included silks, shawls, horses, and Mauser rifles, and his friend of Lahej shared in his jubilation. Sir Ahmed was one of the greatest rulers of that House. Had he lived

up to 1914 his influence with the Turks, and with Imam Yahya, might have induced the Turkish Command in the Yemen to remain neutral in the war, and, in any case, have stopped the Turkish descent on Lahej in July, 1915.

War was declared by Italy on 29th September, 1911, and Italian troops landed at Tripoli. A Polish journalist described Italy's act as " the policy of the stiletto."

The Idrisi Saiyid of Sabia was left outside the ring of Islam, and with him the Italians treated for the use of his ports and produce. They gave him small arms and ammunition ; guns also and gold. Their *nexus* with the Idrisi was ascribed to British machinations !

The Idrisi did not seriously aid the Italians. When he was bought in against Turkey he was engaging Turkish Forces in ABHA, the capital of 'Asîr, where the garrison was beleaguered. Turkish and Mecca forces came up to raise the siege. On arrival at Hali (lat. 18° 36′ N.) they found a large stock of arms, which they alleged came from Italy and from England (*sic*)—from " Governments that are interested in the decline of the Turkish Government," said the Meccan and Pro-Turk historian who served with the combined forces, and he added that " the simple folk of 'Asîr believed the British arms and their gold were mysteriously concealed within the folds of their Master's prayer-mat ! "

The Idrisi was called a *mutahaiyil*, or miracle-monger—*sâhib kalam wa sihr*, one who plied the pen of a ready writer and used enchantment ; or as one expressed it, " Whenever the Government (Turkish) would fight against him, a door of deliverance readily opened for his escape." An electric-battery was his special badge of office. Shocks were administered to his credulous tribesmen, and this as a means to enhance his occult reputation ! I, too, was termed a *sâhir*, or enchanter, and when the Great War broke out, one of the Turkish officers issued a circular letter to all our stipendiaries warning them against my enchantments, which would prove fruitless to save them against the God-inspired might of the victorious Turks, charm I never so wisely.

Another term of endearment used to me was *Shaitan*! It has a secondary meaning of "politician." When an Arab father addresses his small child with the ominous words *Kâtalak Allah* he is not invoking Allah's wrath. It is a playful recognition of the child's independence. Far better such address than unadorned praise or admiration which might bring bad luck. In such case, the praise is given to Allah. Allah is immune from the Eye! So, too, the praise "Perish thy father," or literally, "Thou hast no father," is a jocose expression of surprise or admiration. It is used to describe what is perfection, but all depends upon who says it, and how 'tis said.

The Italians did not find much to do in the Red Sea. They blockaded the ports, excepting those in the hold of the Idrisi. Their ships threw a few shells into Sheikh Sa'îd, opposite the isle of Perim, but no great damage was done. A local poet sent in a contribution to a Cairo paper describing a great battle there, in which the Arab losses were one wretched goat, which capered about defying the Italians gunners till its fate, decreed by Allah, removed it from this mundane sphere. "There is no animal that walketh on the earth, nor a bird that plieth its wings, but are a race like to yourselves, then to their Lord are they resurrected" (Koran). I like the catholicity of the Book.

The Italians have a colony in Eritrea, on the African side of the Red Sea. On it they have expended vast sums, not as yet recovered, but certainly recoverable with the march of time. The railway from the port of Massawa to the plateau of Asmara is some seventy-two miles in length, and a masterpiece of engineering skill. It has been extended in various directions. Water is found everywhere, and lies close to the surface. Their methods as colonists are admirable. Their rule is popular. Italians freely fraternise with the people. They have a way with them that commands success. In many ways we might with advantage take a leaf from their book. They are courteous hosts and genial companions. I look back on pleasant times spent in their midst. When

foreigners come to Aden, British reserve is often interpreted as coldness and hauteur. The Italians in Eritrea are the personification of courtesy. No trouble is spared in entertaining strangers. They look not to entertain angels unawares.

In the Red Sea the Italians might exert a civilising influence. Here our own interests, perhaps, do predominate, and some folk, jealous of our stance, have styled this sea a British lake. The Persian Gulf is another. The Italians and ourselves might work in partnership in the Red Sea. The words of Cymbeline, the King of Britain, were prophetic, and have a meaning to-day.

Let a Roman and a British Ensign wave friendly together.

It was Italy who first befriended the Idrisi Saiyid of Sabia, who still looks occasionally for her assistance; for his ports have for long years been in close touch with the Italian ports in Africa of Assab and Massawa. It is not surprising that Italy looks across to Arabia expectantly. It is their trade they would extend. Idrisi ports export cattle to Massawa, and these are eventually canned in the meat factory at Asmara. In Somaliland they have interests to the E. and S.E. of our own Protectorate, and in their colony of Banâdir they are expending much care and money. A German author writing in 1913 of the Yemen says: "A century ago (*sic*) the British made themselves lords of Aden. . . . The Italians cast longing eyes from Eritrea to the green shores of happy Arabia."

The Italians were interested in new openings in the Yemen. Their Consul at Assab, on the African coast, was a man of great experience, and well conversant with all that went on across the water. Seeing our apathy above Aden, it was natural that Italy should seek developments here. At the capital of Sana an Italian merchant had long been resident, and was on intimate terms with the Imam. Italian merchants of Aden at this time wrote to the Imam to learn his attitude towards Italy. The medium was the Sheikh of Sabâh, a tract lying between

Al 'Arsh to its north and Riyâshia to the south, and in the jurisdiction of the *Kada* of Radâ' (Turkish).

The Italian Consul approached the Sultan of Lahej and asked him to exert his good offices with his friend the Imam to stir up the latter against the Turks. This would strengthen the hand of the Idrisi Saiyid who had allied himself with Italy. This was impracticable, for the Imam had already thrown in his lot with the Turks and was hoping they would exterminate his Arab rival. The Imam's reply to the Sultan of Lahej was couched in strong language. He saw in Italy's advance the attempt of a Western Power to undermine Islam in Arabia. " They imagine," he wrote, " that everything white they see before them is a piece of fat." I do not blame the Italian. They were fighting Turkey in the Yemen. It was open to them to placate the Arabs in that tract and use them, as we used them in 1914, against the enemy.

Our lethargic attitude towards our Protégés led the Italians to believe that the coast of Hadramaut, to the East of Aden, was a fair field for their activities. An Arab dhow from Makalla flying the red flag of Islam, with star and crescent, was seized by them as Turkish property. Arabia in their eyes was no autonomous sovereign state, but a part of the Turkish Empire. When convinced of their mistake they evinced their friendship to us by ever afterwards steering clear of this seaboard.

I asked a naval Italian commander off Hodeida why he did not seize this port. He looked sadly at me and said, " It would displease our good friends the British." The Italians were very careful not to wound Arab susceptibilities in the Red Sea. They moved circumspectly, lest their trade suffer. They had opened a hostel at Hodeida in which medical aid was gratuitously given, but the war closed it down. Since 1906 they had enlisted thousands of Yemeni Arabs for their colony of Banâdir, south of Cape Guardafui. These Arabs came from within our border and beyond. They had been trained in Banâdir and were now sent to fight the Turks in Tripoli. This source of supply was temporarily lost to them in 1911. The Italians highly esteemed these warriors. An Italian

officer told me that their fire-discipline was superior to that of their Abyssinians of Eritrea. The Italian discipline in Banâdir was not over strict. When off parade the men were permitted to trade. They had left their wives in Arabia, and in their exile had taken to themselves to wife the daughters of the colony. "You must be proficient in Arabic?" I said to the Colonel. "Not at all; I control them by affection," said he, laying his hand to his heart. Besides parade work and facilities to trade, these Askaris were usefully employed inland in clearing the jungle and making roads. The pay was good, and after two years' service the men were allowed leave home on full pay, with every incentive to re-enlist. Returned home, they spread the report of Italy's beneficence. Italian influence was thus subtly spread. I like the idea. It was what I had preached in 1905 as our best policy, but I spoke to empty pews; or, if perchance I had a few listeners, my words had fallen among thorns, and these sprung up and choked the seeds sown. The Italian officer showed surprise at British nonchalance—why had we not utilised the martial tribes in our vicinity? How can one account for this *dolce far niente*!

A French writer has written of us: "The English will never force their language or civilisation on their Protégés; they insinuate themselves, all the more by method pacific and slow. They scrupulously respect native customs and institutions, and, hidden behind others, they direct a country into a new path which appears to be self-chosen and will lead to the effacement of the old abuses under which the people suffered."

The tendency of Italian civilisation in Eritrea is to *italianise* the peoples in thought and language, in customs and dress. It is a reversion to the ways of old Rome, which were practised, says Tacitus, with the ancient Britons in such a way that "the wearing of our dress became a distinction . . . and little by little the Britons were seduced into alluring vices—to the lounge, the bath and the well-appointed dinner. The simple natives gave the name of culture (*humanitas*) to this factor of their slavery." More so than in the case of our Protégés are

the Eritreans attached to modern Rome by loyalty and affection.

The French writer proceeds: "The Englishman is so simple in his relations with the people that he incites neither their hate nor their jealousy; he mingles so little with them that they are not bored by his presence." Both systems have their virtues; but, as an integral whole, I think ours is superior. The fact is that policy is the result of national temperament, or, to use a former expression, it is a matter "tout purement géographique."

Be this as it may, the Italians are admirable colonists, and—with insular pride I say it—they are second only to ourselves. They are scrupulously careful not to offend Moslem sentiment. I do not think any of them could ever have used the words attributed to the Baron d'Estournelles de Constant, who in his book *Les Congregations religieuses chez les Arabes et la conquête de l'Afrique* wrote: "The rôle of an officer who should undertake to disintegrate any forces of Islam would be the noblest and most useful a man can play for his country."

The Italian policy, on the contrary, has ever been constructive. A writer in the *Moslem Review* of 1914, talking of that period, quotes the Cairo Press on the Italian decision to found a *riwâk*, or portico, near the Al Azhar University, with intent to provide the boarding of Moslem students from Eritrea and from Tripoli. The hostel was to contain 150 beds and a large reference library. Italian masters would teach the Italian language, and monthly allowances would be paid to students. The object of the Government in question, said the *Mukattam* newspaper, is to educate teachers for Tripoli who could train the rising generation in Islamic doctrine and the Arabic language, and foster a *love of Italy*. All this is good. It spells progress on Arab lines. Let us who are the next-door neighbours of the Arabs in the Yemen either push British influence there, or make way for others so minded.

I would here quote a writer in *Questions Diplomatiques et Coloniales* who was comparing the different attitudes towards Islam of the French and the English in their

respective Colonies. He preferred the rôle of the French, who oppose the spread of Islam and try to inculcate French ideas and education. This, he maintained, tends to *unification*, the blending of various elements into a nationality impregnated with French ideas. The English scheme he portrayed as granting autonomy to native races under their control, with the liberty to manage their religion and education as they pleased. This policy he called *decentralisation. Quot homines. . . .* Landor has said that our policy cannot be carried with us! It must be formed on the spot. The great Sulla said, "All my happy resolutions have been the result, not of reasoning, but of momentary inspiration"; and in his *Rome* Fowler comments thereon that Sulla did not believe in thinking over a problem, and herein he was a true Roman. He hoped to do the right thing on the spur of the moment. No one ever knew what he would do. None could trust him. "Like so many in that and succeeding ages, he believed profoundly in Fortune." I feel bound to say that as regards our Arab policy we seem to have adopted the programme of Sulla! The policy may be elastic. Let us be sure our *principles* are sound and fixed.

The Moslems of Aden were somewhat apathetic in this war, though all prayed, naturally, for Turkey's victory. The Italians they dubbed "macaroni-folk." They were, however, very backward in contributing to the "Red Crescent" Funds, and only after three months' activity and many meetings, did I succeed in securing a sum of Rs.3,000/-, which was sent to Constantinople. Our own policy was one of benevolent neutrality. The Turkish propaganda was a little unkind to us. It was bruited abroad that we strove to weaken the power of the Turks and the Imam, so as ourselves to seize the Yemen. I admit this statement was not altogether inimical to us. It is necessary to read between the lines for its inward meaning. The truth was that in the stress of the war the Turks were not altogether free of suspicion of the Iman's own conduct. What if he, seeing their weakness, should break the 1911 pact? Their propaganda was served up to arouse his antipathy to England. Truly,

as the Arabs say, "war and deceit are one"—*al harb khidā'a.*

I never saw in Aden any instance of Moslem fanaticism towards the Christians. Fanaticism cannot live in Aden's commercial atmosphere. So long as the merchants could trade and run the Italian blockade their days passed all too quickly. Aden's trade during the war was lucrative. The American *Monitor* exemplified the proverb of the ill wind that blows no good in the case of Aden, which had benefited by the diversion to that harbour of shipments from India and the East intended for the Red Sea ports which Italy was blockading.

The Turks, who had the oversight of the lights in the Red Sea, had extinguished these in this war, and navigation was doubly difficult. As a mark of respect to His Majesty King George, during his passage down this sea to India in November, 1911, all the lighthouses were fully operating.

The Idrisi Saiyid by his allegiance to Italy became unpopular in Aden. His name was corrupted to *Al Iblisi*, or the Devil's Man. We say, what's in a name? Much every way in Arabia. The Arabs say that every man's name indicates his characteristics. A merchant of Makalla sent his slave to find a dhow on which to ship his goods to Aden. He returned successful. His master enquired the captain's name. It was *Shāni'*, or a base fellow. Parents will give such names to avert the Evil Eye, especially if a child bearing a reputable name has had a mishap. Still worse, the craft was called *Mahantani*, or "Thou hast plagued me." Sokotrans will give such names out of sheer devilry. "Go back," said the master, "for both names are unlucky." The slave came back later with names of good augury. The boat was called *Jâda'l Karim*—"The Lord hath dealt bountifully with me"—and the skipper bore the auspicious name of *Amân Sâleh*! The Yemen folk, like the Athenians of old, are somewhat superstitious. What matter if the two boats were in reality one and the same, and if the self-same skipper had reappeared bearing a more auriferous name! His purpose served, the merchant made a deal.

The Imam foresaw the decline of the Turks, and was preparing to succeed them. He started a political campaign of self-expansion, and his emissaries went everywhere to make smooth his way. "Apples fall to him who seeks them under the tree." The Imam's activities were considerably hampered by the activities of his rival, the Idrisi in the Tihama.

Various Sheikhs across the border wooed us, asking to come within the influence of our doles. Our invariable reply given was that we would never intrigue against our good friends the Turks. Some of them feared the Imam's aggrandisement. They admitted that his revenue demands were lighter than those levied by the Turks, but they welcomed the latter's rule because under it they could practise extortion, which the Arab Imam would never countenance. The good humour of the Turks led oftentimes to the adoption of a policy of *laissez-faire*.

An important Saiyid of Al Murâwa'a, in the vicinity of Hodeida, was eloquent on the approaching doom of the Turks. He bewailed the dethronement of Abdul Hamid, whom he adjudged a better ruler than his successor, Muhammad the Fifth. This is the general opinion in the Yemen. I remarked on the numeral *five*, which was common to both his new Sultan and our King; it surely augured well for the prosperity of the two nations. He instanced the tyrannical rule of Izzet Pasha in the Yemen and charged his officers with drinking strong liquors. So long as the Moslem sects disagreed the Yemen was doomed to pass into the hands of another, and that other was Great Britain. When I urged our reiterated aversion to expansion he replied: "If a morsel be thrust into your mouth, you cannot but eat it. You English will conquer the Yemen, not by armed force, but by purchase," and he muttered ruefully: *Idha râh al Yemen, râh al Islam*—"If the Yemen goes there goes with it Islam." His Yemen comprised the Hijaz also, and this is the fashion of all Arab cartographers.

My Saiyid deplored the Idrisi's coquetry with the Italians, but the friendship, he believed, was coterminous with the receipt of Italian gold. I remember discussing

the Idrisi in 1918 with the Governor of Eritrea, who told me they had taken up the Idrisi solely to embarrass the Turks in that quarter, and when peace was concluded they had no further interest in the adventurer who had served a useful purpose at a particular moment. Talking of this Arab ruler's service to their cause, he remarked, *Fidersi è bene ; non fidersi è meglio.*

The Idrisi was a man of vast ambition. His flag is of green cloth, and the legend it carried were the words of the Moslem *Kalima,* and the additional words, *wa'l Idrisi Waliulla*—" and the Idrisi, the saint of Allah "—God's good man.

A Zeidi follower of the Imam told me the relations between the Turks and the Imam were strained almost to the breaking point. There certainly had been some differences. By the 1911 agreement the Imam was entitled to call for Turkish assistance against refractory tribesmen. The war with Italy and the Idrisi had distracted the Turks, and it was difficult for them to help the Imam in this direction. The struggle between the Turks and the Idrisi " rebel " was watched by the Imam with unabated interest. The decline of the Turks was manifest, and it was a matter of importance to him that his rival's extermination should precede the exit of the Turks. If the Turks did ultimately disappear, his own extended rule in the Yemen would, he believed, follow as a matter of course. That was good. His line of thought as regards the Idrisi was expressed by him as follows: " If the Turks are strong enough unaided to quash the Idrisi, I have no concern in the *mêlée ;* if they falter, I will espouse their cause."

Arabs, as I have said, were looking for British largesse. Unrest was on every side, and a vague expectancy of something coming—indefinable, but evolutionary. If the English gave them stipends, well and good ; otherwise they would go over to the strongest man. The consensus of Arab opinion was on the side of the Imam, who had befriended the Turks and served the cause of Islam in the Yemen. At heart every Arab craved his own independence. I shall try to show in a succeeding chapter

that if we relieved the Arabs from their treaty-bonds with ourselves, all would approach the Imam on the decline of Turkish rule in the province.

In August, 1912, the French appointed their first Vice-Consul at Hodeida. With the permission of the Italians, I conducted M. Roux and his wife—both charming personalities—to that port in our station-ship. The Italians had done very little damage to Hodeida in their bombardment of the town. The blockade had annoyed the Arabs, and I saw many dhows riding high and dry on the beach, and perishing for lack of use. Their chief complaint, however, was deprivation from tobacco.

The Sultan of Lahej made a journey to Cairo, where he was given a great ovation by the Egyptians; and he called on the Khedive. On his return the Turks sent him the insignia of the Mejidieh Order, through the medium of Izzet Pasha, the Governor-General at Sana. The Turkish letter eulogised Sir Ahmed's zealous service towards the Caliph. The insignia, it is said, would act as a holy charm, as a *baraka*, or blessing, to His Highness and family.

The Imam of Sana, writing to Sir Ahmed of Lahej, asked him to have executed certain repairs to his minting machine, which had created such a *furore* at an earlier date. There was no longer any need for surreptitious dealing in the matter. Sir Ahmed believed his own good offices would cement the friendship between himself, the Imam, and ourselves. I told Sir Ahmed I was contemplating service with the Turks. He advised me to desist, saying it was better to assist the Zeidi Imam. Unaware, as I then was, of the secret agreement existing between the Imam and himself, I expressed surprise at his partiality to the Zeidi cult. He replied that one *Shahâda* united all Moslems, irrespective of creed, and he reminded me that Catholics and Protestants were both believers in Saiyidna Isa (Jesus). Sir Ahmed styled the Turks *Dahriyun*, or materialists. "I do not," he said, "pray for the Caliph, but for myself, at the Friday prayers."

In September, 1912, I urged on Government that the moment had arrived to cement the bond of friendship

between the Turks and Imam, and I made the suggestion that I should enter Turkish service to secure this end in the Yemen ; that such action was not proposed to hamper the Italians in the present war. The sole object in view was to prevent the disintegration of Islam as a political force. To weaken Islam was to weaken British prestige in the Moslem world. My proposal created consternation !

The Arab world was unanimous in believing that we had countenanced the Idrisi's defection to Italy. Even such a man as Saiyid Ahmed bin Kasim b. Abdallah b. Hamid ud din, the Dahyani and rival Imam, in writing to a Saiyid of Behan in our sphere, spoke of us as Infidels who had been domiciled in the Yemen, and surely the Day of Resurrection was at hand !

The Imam Yahya himself had no wish to oppose the British. His ruling passion was to revive the religion of Islam. Many people believed the Imam's restlessness was due to Turkish schooling.

Of our Shâfa'i stipendiaries many approached the Imam and asked for his guidance in the settlement of their private feuds. When I expostulated with one of them, he naïvely protested that a sick man was privileged to call in a second opinion. The young Amir of Dala went so far as to advocate a rallying to the Imam's banner and the abandonment of allegiance to ourselves. It was the call of Arab to Arab. Italy's action seemed to have challenged the very existence of Islam.

An Imamic envoy offered Amir Nasr monetary consideration in return for a *pied à terre* on J. Jihaf, but, his independence thus gravely menaced, the Amir politely deferred compliance. Many of our Yâfa'i tribesmen, too, corresponded with the Imam. His influence was waxing, or, as the saying went, *Kalâm al Imam la budda minhu*—"There is no withstanding the Imam's authority." One of the Al Jauf Sherifs across the border said that whereas a short time ago one Turk would repel fifty Arabs, to-day the tables were turned, and a single Arab was more than a match for fifty Turks. The Government was only *Kah Kah*, or a cackling ! Semitic hyperbole this, but a straw showing how the wind was blowing.

THE LATE LIEUT.-COL. F. M. HUNTER, C.B., C.S.I.,
for 18 years First Political Assistant at Aden, and Consul for the Somali Coast.

Imam Yahya's goal was ever before him. We may call it intrigue. It was pure Irredentism. He knew he would one day come into his own. He could afford to wait. *L'idéal n'est que la vérité à distance.*

I have spoken above of Italy as a civilising power. I recall an article, written so far back as 1886 in the *Birmingham Daily Post*, at the time of the widely-discussed murder of Count Porro at Harrar. The Count went on his mission in spite of the warning of Major Hunter, the First Assistant to the Resident at Aden, who in 1885, in connection with Radman Pasha of Egypt, had so skilfully arranged the retreat of the Egyptian Garrison from Harrar. The writer of the article spoke of our rivalry with Italy, which had taken the place of that with France. Italian influence was spreading all over the world. Count Porro had a tilt at "Signor" Hunter, who for fourteen years had been touring through the Somali country and was all-powerful with the tribes. Hunter is described as a man of forty years, "of calm and gentlemanly aspect, full of gaiety and good humour. The Indian Government allow him *carte-blanche*" (*sic*). Hunter was ignorantly described as a foe to Italian expansion.

The *Morning Post* of 1886 eulogises Italy, who "had accomplished some of the greatest achievements of modern times. Notwithstanding difficulties, she had gained her independence and had realised the ancient dreams of poets and philosophers. All civilised people had been struck with admiration at the feat accomplished by the traditional valour of her old dynasty, the rare wisdom of her statesmen, and the patriotism of all her sons." This was high praise and well deserved. The *Temps* commented a little cynically on Porro's death, saying that England was not deceived by the purely scientific character officially given to the mission; that the Italian Press did not conceal the fact that the mission's real object was to prepare the way for the occupation by Italy of Harrar. This paper threw the entire responsibility for the catastrophe on England, and sums up the situation by saying that "the grand prize the English

hoped to grasp in the commerce of Harrar had, by the Porro affair, vanished into thin air."

Italy has still her activities in this quarter. The rivalries of European nations forebode no good to the peoples preyed upon. These would be independent, and free to control their own affairs. In that event they would be fully prepared to extend their favours to all.

Hunter, whose name is a household word in Somaliland, in Aden, and the Yemen, believed in the self-determination of the peoples in these tracts. He advocated a policy of *ca' canny*, and preferred to oust the evils, as, for example, of the African slave-trade, which was then exercising the mind of Europe, by putting good alongside of them. He would make treaties, and extend civilisation, but first of all free trade. He went so far as to say we should utterly destroy the Danakil's means of subsistence if we at once interfered in the slave-traffic *by land*, though *by sea* our cruisers should catch all dhows so employed. He wrote: "I am a Liberal in politics. Annexation does not commend itself to me." He would pacify the countries by extending British influence and trade without increasing our responsibilities, and to act in such way as to inspire confidence in the native mind as regards our intentions not to appropriate territory, but to exhibit the benefits of a British alliance. He disagreed with Gordon, and said it would not be a great blow to British influence if Italy *did* become all powerful at Shoa. He was rather sceptical of the French methods then in vogue, and said that if the French stayed 100 years in the Gulf of Aden they would have no more influence over the tribes than they then had!

On Colonel Hunter's death in 1898 the *Times of India* wrote in August that he was "a man of brilliant parts. He owed much of his success and popularity to his tact, conciliatory measures, and his great principle of compromise. By the Somal he was loved and respected, and long before the Somali coast fell under his management these folk appealed to him to settle their civil disputes. His name stands, and will be remembered with those of

Haines, and his famous assistant, Cruttenden, as the founders of British power and influence in S.W. Arabia."

I have earlier in this book spoken of the "triple H-men" of the Middle East, and would add to Dumas' trio the name of Hunter of Aden and Somaliland.

To conclude this chapter. Peace between Italy and Turkey was signed in October, 1912. I had occasion to go to Hodeida in that month. I found the people heartily tired of the war. I was able to give them the first news of the peace concluded. The Mutasarrif Rajab Bey received me cordially in the Court House, and the populace were most enthusiastic, attributing to England's mediation the happy termination of hostilities. We drank coffee and various pink potions, and paid other complimentary calls. The Bey apologised for the lack of champagne in which to toast our healths. I sent a congratulatory telegram to Izzet Pasha at Sana, and on my return to the ship sent the Mutasarrif a case of "bubbly" which rejoiced his heart and tickled his palate. He courteously returned the compliment a little time afterwards by sending me to Aden a huge bale of Mokha coffee, accompanied by a letter of appreciation of the little I had been privileged to do for him.

# CHAPTER EIGHT

## THE DECLINE OF THE TURKS AND THE ARAB ASCENDANCY

BEFORE peace was declared between Italy and Turkey the first Balkan War broke out on 30th September, 1912. Peace with Italy was welcomed by Turkey, who could not possibly undertake the double campaign. Christendom in the Balkans was glad to seize the chance of crippling Turkey. By the Treaty of London on 30th May, 1913, peace was signed, and Turkey emerged shorn of her territory.

On 29th June the dogs of the Balkans began quarrelling over the carcass. The Treaty of Bukarest terminated the struggle on 10th August, 1913. See how these Christians love one another! In March, 1913, and just prior to the Treaty of London, the Germans were reported to be manipulating a deal with Turkey for the purchase of Mokha as a coaling-station. Turkey's finances were low. Our informant was a deposed Mutasarrif of Ta'izz, who might possibly have taken his revenge by revealing the secret. On the other hand, the desire for vengeance may have prompted an exaggeration. In any case, the report was bruited everywhere.

The Indian papers eulogised England, who had not joined the Powers to crush Turkey, nor, it was believed, would she do so in the future. A Sind journal, discussing the meetings of Indians on this subject, remarked that it would be hard if, when other neutrals in Europe were permitting, if not encouraging, demonstrations of sympathy with the Balkans, Britain alone should veto the pro-Turk manifestations of her own subjects.

An English weekly took another view, saying the Turks were by no means the most distinguished among Muhammedan Powers; that England was being asked to abdicate her duties as a missioner of civilisation in one continent,

H.H. THE LATE SIR AHMED FADL, K.C.S.I.,
SULTAN OF LAHEJ.

LAHEJ, THE CAPITAL OF THE ABDALI SULTANS.

for fear of the non-existent susceptibilities of the inhabitants of another. The paper added that "England is great according to the extent she acts as England, and not as that somewhat soulless formula, the British Empire." What an exhibition this of "Little England" oratory! I am reminded of an officer in Aden who, when I proposed the toast of the "King-Emperor," himself drank to the "King" only, saying he was of the British Service, and as such recognised no Emperor!

The said newspaper argued thus: If Moslems acquiesce in British rule in Egypt and in India, and in French rule in Algeria and Morocco, why should we suppose them hostile to Christian rule in Macedonia? The argument lacks conviction. Moslems acquiesce in our rule solely because, and so long as, that rule is equitable. Turkey had every reason to suspect the rule of Christians in Macedonia. Again, in Egypt the Nationalists had more up-to-date ideas on the subject of self-determination, and were averse to any foreign rule, however just and equitable. It is no question of whose rule is best, but what rule is most acceptable to the people.

Our Sultan of Lahej, Sir Ahmed Fadl, had no doubts on the subject. He had read in the Cairene papers of the Balkan attack. He rejoiced to hear that British and French warships were at Salonika, but was anxious to know on which side these Governments were. If pro-Turk, then Allah bless them! This, mark you, from one who had backed the Arab Imam against the Turks, but whose heart bled to watch the decline of Turkey before Infidels, for Sir Ahmed was one of the Believers. He was uncertain of the part played by Germany, on whom he invoked Allah's curse: "May Allah fight her; may He weaken her power, and may the combination be scattered!"

Sir Ahmed believed Stamboul might fall, and he wrote earnestly and extravagantly: "England is the most worthy to possess the throne of the Islamic Caliph; far better so than its cession to either Moskof (Russia) or Germany or Austria."

The Italo-Turkish War had left the Turks in the Yemen

very attenuated. The Imam of Sana, Yahya bin Muhammad, although he had buried the hatchet after years of strife against the Turks, had, during the latter struggle with Italy, sat on the fence while he staked out his claims in the Yemen. His aim was that of a scion of the Hijaz House during the Great War. The difference between the two lay in this, that the Imam of Sana was setting out his claims in tracts already his ancestors' in the past years; the other was playing a game of grab at his neighbour's possessions.

Unrest was rife among our stipendiaries. There was a tendency to side with the Imam of Sana, because his power was increasing commensurately with the decline of the Turks. The Sakladi Sheikh to the N.E. of Dala, himself a staunch Shâfa'i, had felt the pressure of the war, and called on us for pecuniary assistance. If we should demur, he knew the Imam, who knew his ancestors, and to him the Sheikh would forthwith turn. The Amir of Dala, too, foreseeing the Imam's expansion in tracts once Imamic, sought our protection, and a 9-gun salute to strengthen the tie. The Sultan of Lahej told me he would value my presence in his capital as Political Agent.

Many of the Yâfa' Province (British) turned to the Imam, and their most influential Sultan, Saleh bin Umar, wrote to him that the English were winning over the Arabs by gold, and these could not resist their bribes. He offered to rise on the Imam's behalf at a hint dropped.

The Shu'âr tribes asked us to come back to Dalá. The venerable Saiyid Muhammad bin Taha, of J. Jihaf, in that quarter, advocated a pact between ourselves and the Turks as the best solution of the question. Zeidi emissaries had come to that hill, and the Saiyid was alarmed. The Nimrâni Sheikh of Murâd, across our N.E. border, had apprehensions of the Imam, who had written through this Sheikh to the Sherif of Behan (British) offering him a larger stipend than he got from us of Aden, and also a grant of land in Khaulân.

Sheikh Husein bin Nagi, the Governor of Medinat Marwâh, to the East of Khaulân, asked to become a

stipendiary of ours, for he, too, feared the Zeidi Imam's advance.

The friendly old Sherif Ahmed of Behan I have mentioned in a prior chapter as a believer in, and a recipient of, our flag. Our stipendiaries have seals supplied by us, and with these they impress the recommendatory letters given to their tribesmen who come down to "see" the Resident in Aden. Old Ahmed had mortgaged his seal to a needy neighbour some two years before this, in return for a sum of $1,000! I had noticed the large increase of those coming down for our bounties! The Sherif at a visit told me frankly, and without a blush, of this transaction, and asked me no longer to honour letters bearing his old seal. The contract had expired, and he had manufactured locally another seal for our future recognition! The Jews do a trade in seals. The Sherif had hoisted our flag at his capital of AL NUKUB. The Zeidi Sheikh of MA'RIB—"The mistress of cities and diadem on brow of the universe"—informed the Imam, who deputed his forces to proceed to Behan. They had arrived at AL 'ARÛSH, three days distant from his capital. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!

The 'Audhali Sultan (British), yclept Kasim b. Ahmed, received a missive from Saiyid Ahmed b. Nasir al Raunal, one of the Imam's *makâdima*, or lieutenants, of Khaulân, telling him of the substitution of Imamic rule for that of the Turks and the consequent benefit accruing to the Arab nation. The Imam was despatching a force to his country, and to Beda, which is technically styled the *Bani Ard*, to pacify these tracts and remove tyranny. The Imam thoroughly understood the inward meaning of "pacific penetration"!

The learned Kadi of Behan wrote in trepidation to our Fadli Sultan of the Imam's lieutenant, intimating that he did not wish Zeidi troops to come down via Radâ', in his vicinity, but these, he altruistically added, should preferably travel viâ Dala to Lahej. "If forces do come down," said the Kadi, "I must accompany them, but, please Allah, they should avoid the Shâfa'i countries." The lieutenant adopted the title of "Al Wathik billah al

jalil" Ahmed, etc. It was incumbent, he wrote, on every Moslem to accept his master, who had no other aim but the unity of the Islamic creed, the defence of the Yemen against the enemies of the Faith, and the establishment of the Muhammedan Sharia. The writer's style of Al Raunal was a pseudonym, and but thinly veiled the influential Zeidi Nasir al Makdushi of Bilad 'Ans.

Letters from the border, and beyond, came daily to Aden calling for our intervention. It was not our rule to intervene. We had been recalled from the Hinterland in 1907 because, forsooth, there was overmuch meddling in Arab affairs. Had we remained at Dala, there was really no question of interference. Our bare presence there was beneficial to the Arabs' pockets, and they were given a visible demonstration of British fairplay and integrity. Arabs in 1912–1913 believed they could not withstand the Zeidi influence. His forces were as the locusts. "If he address us we cannot oppose him." Why? Because British gold attracted them and the absence of taxation. Taxes are due to a ruler, and their prospective ruler was the Imam of Sana. Had we remained up-country, there was no idea of withstanding the Imam's expansion. He could not definitely expand so long as the Turks were there and were strong. Wars, however, were gradually sapping the Ottoman strength. Our presence in Dala was merely educative. I have no objection to the tang of Britain which can "live and let live" while encouraging the expansion of the natives. The Imam was "like a camel-driver without his camel," as they say. Can we cavil at his *wanderlust*? *Plus ultra* was his motto, as it was that of Charles V.

The Turks during their stay in the Yemen recognised no Arab's ascendancy other than that of Imam Yahya. They looked askance at the more recent claims of the Idrisi. Izzet Pasha, the Governor-General at Sana, while acknowledging the sacred descent of the Imam which was established by historical evidence, considered the other as an upstart in Mahdism. His claims, if recognised, would call up a host of other pretenders. The Turks had reason to admit the Imam's prowess, for

some 60,000 troops had been deputed to subdue him, but the end was not gained until Ottoman gold was counted out—this, and the war declared by Italy against Islam.

The powerful Sheikh of Hujariya, Ahmed N'uman, sent in a messenger in 1913 who told me that, by the calculations of their astrologers (hussâb), the Yemen would fall to the British. By way of chaff I suggested the Germans, French, or Italians, but with an oath he discounted their candidature. He prophesied a great war, in which Turks, Imam, and Idrisi would take part.

That over, *Ahl Aden*—the people of Aden—would take over the whole province by diplomacy without force—*bilâ darb wa la ta'an*—and would occupy Sana. The war has taken place, as predicted, but God forbid that we should annex even one span of Arab soil! It was a Sheikh of Hujariya who in Haines' day had professed affection for the British, in order to withstand the pressure of Egyptian troops. Had we adopted in those days a more liberal policy towards Arabs instead of fighting shy of their friendly advances, the Yemen to-day would have been permeated through and through with our influence. We have spurned endless opportunities.

The Imam wrote to the Sultan of Lahej complaining bitterly of Italy's onslaught on Islam. Did she hope to gain influence with himself after decoying one (the Idrisi) whose name Allah had blotted out from the register of the Faithful? Italy as a reformer should have abstained from encouraging the Idrisi at a time when he, the Imam, after long protracted warfare, had come to terms with the Sublime Government. Now the new war, unless checked, would see a general Moslem combination to safeguard the Holy Kaaba. Italy should know her neighbour, the illustrious British Government, could not permit her to injure British commerce and influence, and, of a truth, the day was coming when Britain herself would give heed to the hidden fire, to the reality of which its smoke gave present evidence. Then surely would England cease from flattering Italy

and awake to her own interests by land and sea. If Italy and the Idrisi pursued their blind way, and the fire of war should inflame the blessed Yemen, the Imam prayed that Allah would prompt the British to aid the Believers and destroy these tyrants. We, however, preferred the rôle of a passive spectator. *For a dead opportunity there is no resurrection.*

In 1913 some of the boundary pillars marking the Anglo-Turkish border were dismantled. Arabs urged us to safeguard our rights. It was unseemly for tribesmen to insult a Government, and yet they admitted that Governments move surely if slowly—"The camel of Government will out-tire the gazelle of the tribesman"—*jamal al daula yuzahhif ḏhabi al Kabili.*

I went up to the border in 1913 and was welcomed everywhere. Six years of absence had effaced no memories. A Turkish nominee had overstepped his bounds, and encroached on the preserves of our Protégé, the Haushabi Sultan. It was arranged that I should go up later and meet the Turkish representative on that border, but the Great War intervened and nothing was done.

The Cairo paper *Al Ahram* published on 14th June, 1913, a lot of rhodomontade on this my visit. I had gone up, it was said, with 500 troops, and had acted in a hectoring manner. I had promised the Kaimakam of Kamâ'ira wealth galore if he would satisfy my demands. Foiled in my attempts to draw this official, I had proceeded with my army to the Hujariya district, where I was sumptuously entertained by the Zureika Sheikh, to whom I promised a British stipend, and actually gave him a gun, a hundred rifles, and various other gifts to the Zureika clansmen, to bribe them over to our side! The man who invented these fairy-tales was probably the well-known Haj Ali al Kamarani, who lived hard by at his village of Al Kharânîm, and had visited me at my camp at *Al Kufuf*, on the Haushabi-Turkish border. It was at this place that the pillars had been dismantled. This same Haj had differences with me at an earlier date when I objected to his officious interference on the

border. This article, which I quote, was full of fulsome flattery of the Haji's virtues. The writer went on to describe a simultaneous visit of the Resident of Aden in company with the Sultan of Lahej to the port of Mokha, where a full enquiry was made into its utility and political possibilities. Mokha was described as the prime port of the Yemen before the British occupation of Aden. The Sultan of Lahej was shocked, it continued, to see the ruin of its former greatness, and remarked, " What ! Is this Mokha—the Head, or the Brain, of the Yemen ! (The pun is lost in the translation.) Where has it gone ? Where its prosperity, its merchandise, its peoples, its industries ? Its brain is killed, and its bare shell remains ! " As Bacon puts it, Sir Ahmed had the " wisdome of crocodiles, that shed tears when they would devoure " ; or, with the Koran, " he spoke with his tongue what was not in his heart." He believed that the ruin of Mokha gave the requisite impetus to Aden's advance, and that only had brought prosperity to Lahej and all in that vicinity.

*Al Ahram* commented on its correspondent's copy as follows : " Does Al Istâna (Stamboul) realise what has happened ? Does she not remember the Yemen—a country without equal on the face of the earth ? Its moderate climate, its sweet waters, the fertility of its soil with crops reaped three or four times in the year, its people so sagacious, and, though Bedouins, but few of them illiterate ? Mines abound, and its resources in gold are notorious. The Yemen might suggest to its readers a land of barbarians, but its defects are not in the land, nor in its climate, nor in its people. We have held this country for half a century, and yet with the exception of its earliest administrators, Sinan Pasha, Husein Hilmi, and Kiamil Bey, none has taken any interest in the province. They all regard their charge as a place of exile, or even as hell, whereas it is an earthly paradise—*jannat al ard*. They are concerned only in tyrannising the inhabitants and robbing them of their wealth. By Allah ! should our Father Adam revisit this earth and traverse its utmost bounds he would find no

tract so backward as this Province of the Yemen"; and so forth.

There is a foundation of truth in the charges levelled. Turkey is a military power, and has less genius for civil administration. For this reason I approached the Home Government in May, 1914, and suggested we should step in to consolidate Turkey in Arabia, and more especially in the Yemen, where I was interested. The idea was to help to terminate the hostilities between the Turks and the Idrisi; to preserve the pact concluded between the Imam and the Turks; and to bring together the two contending Arab rivals. We should then convince Islam the world over that we were the Moslem's sincere friend. I believed that if the Turks were ousted from the Yemen we should be confronted by groups of Arab fanatics, and the result might be the gradual defection of our stipendiaries to join an Arab state in antagonism to us in Aden.

My plan recommended itself to the Home Authorities, but the time was unpropitious. However, as the pioneer of a band working for the triple alliance of Turks, Arabs, and ourselves in the Yemen, I approached the Embassy in London and offered my services to Turkey in that province. The Ambassador was most cordial, and gave me a written introduction to the Headquarters in Sana. There was one flaw in this document, as I found several months later. I was described as a Moslem, and so specially useful to the cause of the Turks in the Yemen! Was this a mistaken notion of my creed, or was it the sting in the tail of the scorpion? The letter was in Turkish, and the envelope was sealed. "It is a good recommendation," was all the Ambassador Tewfik Pasha would tell me. The Great War put an obstacle in my path, and one month after the Turks had entered the arena I broke the seals and read the contents. "Verily," says the Koran, "some suspicions are sins." I give the Turk the benefit of the doubt. He meant me well.

The Subehi tribesmen to the north-west of Aden were fighting their fellows across the line, and the Abdali Sultan of Lahej had inaugurated a direct correspondence

with Turkish Arabs to secure a settlement. The borderline was a fiction to all practical purposes. Ourselves in Aden had been accustomed to deal direct with Turkish officials. It was economy of time, and, what was of greater importance, it showed the Turks we were locally alive to our interests. This practice was discountenanced by those in authority. It was thought easier to refer the matter to our Ambassador at Stamboul. The advantages of direct and amicable interrelations 'twixt the Turks and ourselves were nothing accounted of.

The bad blood existing between Imam and Idrisi the Arabs attributed to British intrigue. The policy of our Government, they said, was to put up one and set down another, and we knocked head against head—*Al daula tukîm nâs wa tuhdim nâs, wa tukassir ras bi ras.*

Others circulated a contrary report of an Imamo-Idrisi alliance. It was said that the Imam's delegates had arrived at Abu 'Arîsh, and the Idrisi had accepted the conditions imposed. The latter would relinquish his claims of suzerainty over five specific tribal areas; would cede to the Imam the two districts of Aflah and Al Khamisain, whose peoples, if they sought asylum with the Idrisi, would be spurned by him, nor their tithes accepted. In consideration of these promises, the Imam undertook to remove his men from their position in the 'Asîr province. This *rapprochement* was attributed to the new Governor-General at Sana. As a matter of fact, no union was effected, though Mahmud Bey strove his hardest.

Arabs wrote extolling the prowess of the Imam, who was styled the "Offspring of Allah's Messenger." To him veneration was due for the sake of his grandfather Muhammad. None should disregard the rule of the Imam, seeing that they derived benefit from the family of Al Husein. This shows the Arab's belief in the Imam's origin from the younger son of the fourth Caliph, as I have written in chapter vi.

The phrase in common currency expressed the true Arab feeling—*Idha waka'at al Sharîmain Sharîm wâhid fatarat il 'Arab*—"If the two shears are joined into one

the Arabs are doomed." The two shears were the Turks and the Imam. The Turks with their increasing weakness clung tenaciously to the Imam as clings the chameleon to his bough. The Imam on his part affected a show of coquetry, though at heart he was shy of amorous dalliance. If Turks and Arab Imam were able to combine, the Arabs saw plainly their coming subservience to this political combination. The Turks would derive an overflow of vitality, and in course of time absorb both the Imam and the Yemen besides. The Arabs distrusted the Turks accordingly. They preferred each one his independence, but Zeidi or Arab domination was better than the sole control by the Turks.

In January, 1913, I had a talk with a Turk official who was at one time the Kaimakam of Ibb, in the Yemen. He was travelling to Baghdad to join an appointment. He believed the Turks would not abandon the Yemen. The peace made with the Imam in 1911 would remain in force for ten years. The Imam had so far behaved according to plan, and would do so as long as his Arab rival, the Idrisi, was left unsubdued. Thereafter things might alter, since the Turks and the Imam distrusted one another. Both, however, were in agreement over the necessity of annihilating the House of Ibn Idris.

Talking of England, the Turk said that she was from time immemorial a friend to Turkey, and it was a grave error in the days of Abdul Hamid to cultivate so assiduously the friendship of others. He was in favour of an Anglo-Turkish entente, for the two peoples were neighbours, and England's friendship was an invaluable asset. Shevket Pasha he termed a bad choice as Grand Vizier, for his qualities were military rather than diplomatic.

A Turkish gentleman from Smyrna, and M.P. for Aidin, called on me. He had been to Sana to study the situation, and was just then off to India to interview the Begum of Bhopal. This Turk admired the British, but was distrustful of our Liberal Government. Even in Salisbury's régime, he said, British policy left much to be

desired. Turkey was courting Great Britain's friendship. He, too, negatived the rumour of the cession of the Yemen to the Imam. He had advised his Government to give the British preferential trade-concessions in the Yemen, where Turkish military rule must remain predominant.

Yet another, a Kurd, gave me his views. He had been lately a Mutasarrif in the Yemen. He believed the Imam would be left in undisputed possession of Sana, the Turks retaining Menakha, the country of the Ismailiyan sect, and all to its south and south-west. He derided the proposed railway schemes in the Yemen as inadequate.

And what of our own railway schemes? The Sultan of Lahej had long wished to construct a railway, linking up his capital with *Dar al Amir*, which is his boundary Aden-wards and lies just beyond Sheikh Othman, itself ten miles from Aden. Its utility proved, he could extend the line thereafter northwards to tap the rich country in the direction of Mawia, the Turkish fort across our border. We, however, threw cold water on the scheme, which would considerably have enriched the port of Aden. It was thought undesirable to link up our Hinterland even at the expense of a British syndicate! We had been cleared out of our Hinterland on political grounds, and a railway meant a reversion to a "forward policy" that would offend Turkey and annoy our stipendiaries! So we lost another chance of peaceful penetration. I am more than ever convinced that the curse of Cain broods darkly over Aden, and thwarts all aims towards progress and the demands of civilisation. This obsession of wounding Turkey's susceptibilities! In 1882, when we acquired Sheikh Othman from *our Sultan of Lahej*, the Turks of Stamboul objected to our aggrandisement!

The power of Turkey in the Yemen was becoming a mere name. Talking to me of their weakness, the Kadi of Behan said: '*Âm Allah basâirhum! sabab tashtît Kilimathum*, or, "May Allah render them blind seeing they have lost their power!" Beloved, if they had stayed the Imamic steam-roller, the Turks in their fall

were accursed! Compare his mistress' dirge over the Caliph Suleiman before his decease in 99 A.H.

Of all enjoyments thou art supreme, didst thou but endure,
But mortal man lacks perpetuity!
There is but one fault in thee, which is common to man,
Thou art transitory.

Late in the year 1913 there called on me a Turkish Inspector of Public Instruction from Ta'izz. He expressed great affection for the English. Turkish rule, he admitted, was on the wane, and he would become a paid informant of ours. The Turks and the Imam had opened a political campaign in the Hadramaut, and the Bey offered to keep me *au courant* with the scheme. I told him our friendship with Turkey prevented my compliance, and I advised him to work for a Turco-British friendship rather than combat his own Government. He agreed that my plan was the better one, and left me after negotiating a £10 loan repayable on his return to Headquarters! This same gentleman came again in March, 1914, professing unabated zeal to further our cause. He looked for fame rather than remuneration! The Koran says, "There is no voice more disagreeable than the voice of an ass"; but I would give the palm to the voice of one betraying his Government to earn the praise of a stranger. My informant told me the Governor-General in Sana had recently received a letter bearing eighty seals of various Hadramaut Sheikhs, who complained of the British Government. That dignitary had replied, promising their inclusion within the fold of the Porte! This was the Imam's *Drang nach Osten*. He thinks imperially.

Sir Ahmed Fadl wrote presaging the Turks' removal from Europe, and Arabs must see to their best interests. The Governor-General of the Yemen had gone to Stamboul. If we cherished any idea of occupying the Yemen, Sir Ahmed would be glad to assist us, so that both of us might reap advantages! How little our best friends believed our disavowals of self-aggrandisement! Perfide Albion!

On the 10th March, 1914, or 1332 A.H., the Day of Certainty overtook Sir Ahmed. His loss to me was irreparable. A more enlightened Arab ruler there never was, nor a truer friend. Oft when seated with him we would discuss matters social, political, and even religious. His sense of humour was keen. I only wish I could find the space to record his anecdotage. Diabetes had soured his latter days. He felt anxious as to the fortune of his three sons, and one of his last acts was to commit their well-keeping to my charge. His coffers had been well-nigh depleted by his munificence to other chiefs and to the turbulent Subehi *canaille*, who depended largely on his largesse. He had often asked for an enhancement of his stipend, for his resources were small. Every succeeding Resident of Aden had acknowledged his signal services, but no monetary increase was given, though recommended by Aden. This treatment is on a par with the pious Believer's reply to beggarly importunity—*Bârika fîk*, or, "I recommend you to the beneficence of Allah." It precludes an opening of the purse-strings.

His marriage alliance with Yâfa' had given Sir Ahmed a leading voice in that quarter, and his influence was always placed at our disposal. Vexed with our apparent indifference to his pecuniary plight, he wrote to remind us that we had filched Aden from his forbears. "Time has passed, and ill-feeling has given place to affection towards you. Aden in your hands is as if it were still in mine. Aden has become an important fortress in your hands, the centre for trade, and the port is rich. We rejoice at its progress." He reminded us that British influence had permeated the Yemen, and he was glad to think the end achieved was the result largely of his good offices.

The water-scheme planned for Aden by which fresh river-water was to have been conducted by pipes, after infiltration at the wells newly dug at his village of Fiyush, would have increased his revenues considerably, but the scheme never matured owing to opposition fostered in Aden. There are differences of opinion as to the

advisability of carrying water by pipes into Aden from that distance. Personally I would increase the number of condensers and give the people pure water at a nominal price. Aden, as Zoar, is but a little one, and Bombay was but little interested in its progress.

In February, 1914, the Turks at Hodeida were buying ammunition from Djibouti, and had asked permission through their acting agent in Aden for its conveyance by one of the steamers of a local Aden shipper. Capt. Husni Bey, who figured at a later stage on the staff of General Ali Said Pasha before Aden, was deputed to arrange the details of the transfer. The Yemen before the Great War was well stocked with ammunition and shells. The Turks had been fighting there continuously. It is certain that their stocks were not replenished during the last war, but they never lacked a sufficiency at any period.

In September, 1913, I took leave to Syria. I landed at Beirut minus a passport, but, meeting a friend on board the boat from Port Said, my name was added to his passport as his valet. This secured me from annoyance. The Turkish Customs Official asked me if I had anything to declare. I opened one of my cases, took out a box of fine cigars, chose one, and placed it politely between his lips. Striking a match, I lit the weed and stood watching his next move. He at once chalked a cross on all my boxes, and I walked out. My companion's "Open Sesame" was a golden sovereign too publicly offered, and as a result the opening of all his many boxes of provisions! Both of us had resorted to bribery; the Turk that forenoon lusted for tobacco, and not for lucre. It was all a toss-up—or, rather, it was "written"—that one should succeed and the other fail.

During my stay in that country I was shadowed by a Turkish detective in the form of an amusing advocate who sat next me in my hotels and regaled me with funny stories. He also wrote amorous verses in my autograph book. A very pleasant Turk, truly! One day I charged him directly with espionage. He seemed offended at the

idea, and I never saw him again. Doubtless another, and less obtrusive minion, dogged my steps.

On the late afternoon of my arrival in Damascus I was invited, through the courtesy of our Consul, to a State function given in honour of the birthday of the Sultan. It was a gorgeous affair, attended by both sexes. Like the Jinns of the Koran, some of these were righteous and others not quite so! A bevy of German cavalry officers did the honours, clad resplendently in uniform, and our party were plied liberally with champagne and other confections. I had arrived in advance of my boxes, and, clad only in a travelling kit of khaki, had not intended to mix with the élite of Damascus society. The Turkish Governor, however, beckoned me to sit by his side on the diwan, and we had a half-hour's talk on various subjects. He was a courteous Turkish gentleman—need I say more? There is something innately chivalrous about the best-bred Turks. The Governor made me feel perfectly at home. When I apologised for my unseemly garments, he smilingly waved aside the superfluity of my remark, adapting the wording of the Book, "It shall be no crime on the part of the *traveller*" if his clothes lack cleanliness. His leanings were towards the English and their ways, and his children were in the keeping of an English governess.

After dinner, as we would sit in the lounge of our hotel listening to the lisping lullaby of the waters of the Barada (the Abana of the Old Testament), we received the nightly visits of the Commandant Suleiman Pasha, who, unbuckling his sword, would sit and chat with us, as he quaffed his seltzer mingled with *usquebaugh*. The Turk believes with Al Hariri, and with myself too, that, "failing the inspiration of the cup, the mouth will not expand with pleasantries." The Pasha drew me, in pencil, maps of the 'Asîr Province in the Yemen, and recounted the prowess of the Bani Asîr tribesmen, who so successfully withstood his generalship. In his train was the *posse* of German officers. They employed their time in polo and in training the Turkish cavalry. The troops they admired; the officers less so.

I was especially impressed during my stay by the kindness of the Turk, and his genial *camaraderie.* During a visit to the ruin of Baalbek I was interested in the legend in Arabic and German which adorned one of the walls and was descriptive of the Kaiser's renovating munificence. The authorities were obliged to wire over the writings to protect them from the stones flung, by which a part of the legend had been effaced.

I will conclude with a mention of the call at Aden in November, 1913, from Chinese waters, of the Austrian warship the *Kaiser Franz Joseph I,* commanded by Capt. Heinrich Ritter von Naula. He and a few others dined with me. I proposed the toast of our King and then that of the Dual Monarchy, the Emperor and the Austrian Navy. I said that while we were on friendly terms with the Germans and with Italy I wished the Austrians had not joined the Triplice. Von Naula, who had thoroughly pro-British views, rose to reply. Smiting his breast, he assured me that Austria's heart beat in unison with England's. He disliked the Germans, and believed the day would come when the Italian Navy would be blown out of the Adriatic. At every port his men, where possible, played football with British sailors and soldiers, and though his team could not successfully compete with us, they had so far improved that, while a year ago they had lost to a British side without scoring a single goal, they had recently replayed the same team and lost by 1–4 only.

The following night the warship entertained all Aden. Both Austrian and British airs were played at the dinner. When delivering the toast, the Captain said the English were the best people in the world, and he would like to see them everywhere in the ascendant. The dinner and decorations were superb, and the Munich beer was a dream!

Just another picture—made in Germany. In January, 1914, the Korveten-Kapitan Grashof brought in the S.M.S. *Geier* to the Aden harbour and called on me. I returned the call the next day. During the conversation I jocularly asked the Captain whether he intended to

capture Aden, seeing he had the *Geier* and *See Adler* in port, and the *Kondor* was shortly expected! He laughed uneasily, and then blushed deeply. "It is quite impossible," he said. I drank more Munich beer, and we chatted over the "multitudinous laughter" of the dancing waters. Did these know of the Armageddon that was swiftly approaching?

## CHAPTER NINE

### THE GREAT WAR

THE entry of Turkey into the war was foreshadowed by the Imam, who in July, 1914, exhorted Moslems to resist the coming onslaught on Islam. The Balkan War was fresh in his mind. The Turks, too, in September, 1914, were concentrating at Sheikh Sa'id, opposite our possession of Perim.

The Imam distrusted the Idrisi Pretender who in 1911 had sided with the Italians against Turkey, and would be only too glad again in 1914 to smooth the way for a Christian conquest of the Yemen. The Turkish Governor-General at Sana was feverishly active in his attempts to win over the Idrisi, for the Turks would thus secure the trade-routes passing through 'Asîr. The Idrisi declined the offer. Mahmud Nadim's task was a difficult one, and called for careful handling. If the Idrisi were won over, against the Imam's wishes, the latter would resent the consequent strengthening of his rival's hold on the Yemen lowlands. The Idrisi had escaped annihilation in 1911, thanks to Italy. The time had come to crush him. The Idrisi sent an envoy to Aden to negotiate a treaty.

The Sultan of Lahej, Sir Ali bin Ahmed, K.C.I.E., wrote letters to the Imam saying that Turkey's entrance into the war was inevitable, and the Imam should make up his mind to stand by the Sovereign who ruled over more Moslems than any other Sovereign in the world. The British would preserve the sanctity of the two sacred cities of the Hijaz, secure the independence of the Arab States, and the suzerainty of each ruler, in his own sphere.

After the entry of the Turks (November, 1914), and in January, 1915, the Imam sent his envoy Muhammad Ali Sherif to Lahej to discover the mind of the English

Government. I interviewed the envoy in the presence of Sir Ali. The Imam's argument was as follows: He pleaded his inability to break faith with the Turks, with whom he had in 1911 made a ten-year truce. After their entry into the war the Turks had failed to pay the Imam his stipend, and that of his tribesmen, the Hâshid and Bakîl. To compensate him for this breach of contract, and to give him a larger measure of sovereignty, the Turks proposed to evacuate Sana and vicinity, and to make Ta'izz their Headquarters. They mooted the possibility of creating a Mutasarrifate at Lahej, but to this the Imam demurred. The Turks would have gone further and abandoned the entire Yemen to the Imam had German agency not sinisterly suggested that such a step would facilitate British occupation of the country! The Imam, on the other hand, did not relish the Turkish abandonment of Sana, lest his tribesmen get out of hand. The Turkish dole paid direct to these tribesmen had estranged them from their proper master.

Our bombardment in November, 1914, of Sheikh Sa'id, on the mainland, was the answer to the concentration of Turks there, which presented a menace to Perim. Our troops landed, after bombardment had silenced the few Turkish guns on the hill-top. The Arab village was uninjured, but the guns rendered useless. After a few hours the troops re-embarked and resumed their voyage westward. This action at Sheikh Sa'id was done without the political approval of Aden. The Imam was incensed, and the Governor-General of Sana broadcasted a manifesto depicting the ulterior motives of Great Britain, who was bent on annexation. Our action had aided the Turkish propagandists. It had no tangible results.

I at once addressed Imam Yahya, defending our act as a military necessity, and assured him we had no ulterior aims; that our immediate departure therefrom would confirm my statement. The Imam replied from 'Amrân. He realised our general non-interference in Arab affairs, but regretted the affair of Sheikh Sa'id, which had aroused Arab suspicion everywhere. He described his aims in the Yemen as spiritual and not

temporal. In his letter to the Sultan of Lahej he explained his activities against certain Arab tracts in the N.E. of the peninsula. His action was the result of Turkish weakness, which moved him to consolidate the country against any aggression from without. He enlarged on his devotion to Lahej, and engaged to repel all attacks in that quarter. At heart the Imam would welcome the exit of the Turks. He was between the Devil and the deep sea. Open rebellion against the Turks was impracticable for reasons already stated. If he remained inactive and neutral, he pictured the increased activity of his rival, the Idrisi, who, living on the sea, was free to consult whoever called there, and was unbeset, as himself, by the cordon of Turkish troops about Sana. His inability to act would, furthermore, be constructed as a mark of enmity to us. Personally, I have ever combated this idea, which was put forward all through the war and is still to-day advanced by those who have not studied the Imam's mentality. These critics lose no opportunity to vilify the historic House of Zeid.

The envoy extolled the British, and quoted the Koranic text which singles out the Christians as the Believers' nearest friend. He gave his opinion that the desideratum was: "Arabia for the Arabs, with an Arab Caliph at Mecca." Looking to Imam Yahya's own ambitions, I must explain that, by this admission, the envoy did not waive his master's claim to the highest spiritual office.

In August, 1914, the relations between the Imam Yahya and the Idrisi Saiyid were very strained. The Idrisi's claim to suzerain rights in his own sphere, the Imam could not admit. The Idrisi's adhesion to Italy had closed the door to their reunion.

The continuance of good relations between Turks and Imam during the Great War was of supreme importance, and was due solely to the good offices of Mahmud Nadim, who had succeeded Izzet Pasha in the Governorate. The Imam of Sana could not conscientiously recognise the Turkish Caliph. To the Zeidi mind Muhammad V was just a Moslem King. This is only natural when one considers the origin of the Imam's House and its long

continuance in the line of Zeid, the great-grandson of the Caliph Ali. Before the Great War the Imam was in direct communication with the Sherif of Mecca, with Ibn Sa'ûd, and with Ibn Rashid. He wished for friendly relations with us, and he recognised our grip on certain tracts above Aden. He also realised we had no aims of self-aggrandisement. After the war he had less cause to regard us without guile, for he knew of our relations with the Idrisi and our connivance in the Idrisi's occupation of Hodeida, the port of Sana, his capital. The Imam's policy during the war was one of neutrality. His envoy had said that his master would be a mere spectator if the Turks entered the war. The Imam gets his foodstuffs from his own tracts, but his scattered subjects depend largely on Aden and the Red Sea ports. It was therefore inexpedient for the Imam to enter the war against the British. He foresaw the ruin of the Turks, if they befriended Germany.

The envoy had expressed his master's wish that we should send him instructors in the manufacture of gunpowder. "If you can comply," said his messenger, "there is nothing the Imam will not do for you." Our compliance was not possible at that time.

On Germany's declaration of war prayers for the success of the British arms were offered in all the Aden mosques, and a refrain that was echoed throughout the settlement ran thus:

*Yâ kawwi ! Yâ 'Azîz !*
*Ahlak al Jarman, wa ansur al Inklîz.*

(O Mighty and Powerful One, destroy the German, and give Victory to the English !)

When the Turks joined the Central Powers all our inland and influential chiefs prayed for British success. Saiyid Abdallah 'Aidrûs, the Mansab of Aden, and its religious head, waxed very eloquent over Turkey's entry. "The grave mistakes committed by Turkey against the closest friend of Moslems—the one who had oftentimes supported the Sublime Porte"—gave him

much sorrow. "We are," he said, "the most loyal of Britain's friends since the occupation of Aden in 1839. We pray for the victory of Britain, the best and most just Government which has ever worked for the cause of Islam." How different was the 'Aidrûs to-day from his forbear of 1840, who falsely charged Haines with a desire to destroy Islam, and had threatened to go over to the Egyptian Commander in the Yemen!

Aden during the war stood loyal to us, even when the demands of religion led them throughout its duration to pray for the welfare of the Turkish Caliph. Our rule in Aden for seventy-five years had impressed the folk with our good faith. It was apparently not always so, for in 1884 that distinguished First Assistant to the Resident, Major F. M. Hunter, in reporting the pro-British tendencies of the Abyssinian Province of Harrar which the Egyptians were about to evacuate, wrote as follows: "In Aden itself, of course, *we have to keep the mixed population in order with a rod of iron*, but all find their benefit in the peace, security, and freedom from restrictions in trade."

At the commencement of hostilities with Turkey, a hasty order emanated from India directing the military to deport all Turkish subjects from the settlement, but we were able to get this order cancelled. Several thousand Turkish and Imamic subjects are domiciled in Aden. These find lucrative employment and prefer British administration. They furnish the bulk of Aden's labour-market, and their disappearance would not only have penalised trade, but have called forth resentment against us in the interior.

At the outset of war the local police proposed to force taxi-cab owners to erase the Turkish flag painted on the panels of some cars as an adornment. This flag is also the flag of Islam, and I annulled the order as likely to arouse excitement. It was better again to belittle the fact, and let loyal Arabs take the initiative. A little quiet chaff worked wondrously, and the emblems were erased.

Aden in certain quarters was obsessed by this so-called

Turkish flag. The flag flies at most of the shrines, and orders were given for their removal. The Arabs at once complied. The official action caused them no little amusement.

In January, 1915, a so-called Turkish flag flew over the palace of the Sultan of Sokotra in Hadibu. He was asked to substitute the Jack, which he readily did on the approach of a British ship. Arabs are Moslems, and like the Moslem's flag. There is the religious side of the question and the secular. Reverence paid to the Head of Islam did not preclude loyalty to Britain's King. I remember in 1910, after the passing of King Edward VII, the flood of letters of sympathy we received in Aden from all our Arab stipendiaries. The phraseology was such as is used to a Moslem King. The accession of King George V called forth expressions of friendship and loyalty. The Arab has two *Kings* temporal; to one of them he owes spiritual allegiance also. This spiritual factor gives tone to the temporal.

A detailed account of the war in Aden would fill a volume. I will confine myself to general remarks, and will treat rather of the political aspect; the effect on our Protégés, and the parts played by our Ally, the Idrisi Saiyid, and the Imam of Sana, whom we vainly wooed.

From Aden we addressed each treaty chief, explaining Turkey's action, and our own intentions towards the Arabs. Sir Ali, the Sultan of Lahej, was an active propagandist on our behalf. The House of Lahej is venerated throughout our sphere and beyond. His intimacy with the Imam was of inestimable service to us. In June, 1915, the Turks diligently sought the active co-operation of the Imam, who pleaded the existence of pledges given to Lahej and the Aden Residency.

Our notification of 2nd November, 1914, that the Holy Places and Jedda would be immune from attack or molestation by the British Naval and Military Forces, so long as there was no interference with Indian pilgrims to the shrines, favourably impressed all Moslems, and our Arab Allies in particular. These latter were shy of

actively joining us owing to their uncertainty as to the final destiny of the Turks and the Imam in the Yemen. They craved our armed support. The war gave proof of the characterless nature of our Protectorate treaties!

The descent of the Turks from Mawia and the Hujariya districts was the result of several causes, direct and indirect. Our retreat from Dala in 1907, and our failure to construct a railway, though so often urged, had impressed the Arabs with a profound belief in our lack of interest, and the Turks made much capital of our insouciance. In January, 1915, I had proposed a visit to the border, in proof of a re-awakened interest in our sphere, but this was disallowed. We pressed for reinforcements, but the situation was so little understood that it was proposed to withdraw half the garrison on some fantastic scheme in Somaliland, which scheme fortunately never matured. The proposal to decrease our garrison had become public property. Our lack of troops encouraged the Turks. The bombardment of Sheikh Sa'id had aroused Arabs on the Turkish side. The later bombardment in June, 1915, of Luhaiya, intended to placate the Idrisi Saiyid, who had allied himself to us in April, 1915, led the Turks to suspect a division against them on this front. The Idrisi himself wrote that the injury done to the Arab town of Luhaiya pained his people. What finally compelled Ali Said Pasha to leave Mawia and move southwards on Lahej was his dislike to quartering his troops on the Turkish-Arab population within his border, and so alienating their sympathies. That soldier-diplomat therefore decided to bring his men down to Lahej and make this latter country pay for their upkeep. The Imam was averse to the proposal, but General Ali Said was masterful, and turned a deaf ear to all remonstrance.

The author of *Pan-Islam* has given his version of the events which led to the fall of Lahej on 5th July, 1915. He was not there in person, and has relied on hearsay evidence supplemented by his own participation in Aden politics up to 1904, or ten years previous to the war. I have already alluded to his appraisement of the Abdali

Sultan's rôle in Aden affairs. It is grossly incorrect to have written that the Haushabi Sultan was suborned "all unknown to his next-door neighbour"; and a lack of good taste to have styled the Abdali a "purblind Sultan," who "refrained from breaking Aden's holy calm." It is true that the Haushabi Sultan broke faith with us and suddenly joined the Turks at Mawia, some three weeks previous to the fall of Lahej. The Aden Troop had been posted at Nobat Dukain, above Lahej, to give us first-hand news of the enemy's movements. On idle grounds of insecurity this detachment was recalled to Lahej. We lost thereby a valuable channel for reliable information, and it was just at this point that the forces from Hujariya were able to debouch and join the main body as it marched down from Mawia. The Abdali's scouts were there, but naturally they were not so efficient as our trained troopers.

The Sultan had collected 2,000 Arabs from within our Protectorate to guard his capital. The expense of keeping them was a heavy charge on his revenues. Six days before the Turks actually moved I went to Lahej to collect 700 camels for military eventualities, and these were supplied by the Sultan on the third day. The Sultan then realised that we meant business ourselves, and he felt justified in releasing his mercenaries.

At my visit, which was a hasty one—because the Government had forbidden me to leave Aden—Sir Ali quoted the Koran *Maryam* 24, where Allah's messenger says to Mary: "Shake towards thee the trunk of the palm-tree, and it will drop on thee fresh ripe dates." It was a plain hint that the time had come for *our* action. For months we in Aden had been a voice crying, and we had been unheeded. It was no lack of vigilance on our part. We had foreseen the invasion and foretold it. Three days after the camels had been collected the Turks moved out of Mawia. Our slender garrison of Aden moved simultaneously to Sheikh 'Uthman, and thence to Lahej.

What then happened has been before told. I do not wish to attach blame to any particular party. The

Abdali forces made a gallant stand near Am Tannân and Nobat Dukaim, but they could not withstand the Turkish guns. It is therefore ungenerous to have written that "any intelligent and timely grasp of enemy's strength and intentions would have given the poor man ample time to pack his inlaid baskets, Persian carpets, etc., and withdraw in safety to Aden." Lookers-on do proverbially see most of the game, but absentees are scarcely qualified to criticise. Sir Ali did not seek safety in Aden. He gamely kept his post in Lahej, awaiting the display of our strength, and only retired on our position at 2 a.m. on Monday, when the Turks were in indisputed possession of his capital. He was wounded by our men in the darkness, and was driven in his car to Aden, where he expired a few days later under an operation. Mr. Bury says that after the withdrawal of the Boundary Commission the Aden authorities had so overstrained the policy of non-interference that "they would neither keep in direct personal touch themselves nor would let anyone else do so" and that "when an accurate up-to-date knowledge of the Hinterland would have been invaluable, it was not available"! All this is a travesty of facts. It is true we had been removed from Dala in 1907 by a Home Government which little understood the Arab sentiment. By our personal touch in the Hinterland dating from 1904–1907 we had acquired valuable knowledge of the *personnel* of the interior, and the best proof of the impression we had made was seen in the general behaviour of our Protégés during the Great War. From 1907 we lost the advantages which accrue from an actual sojourn in the country, but we were conversant with the views and opinions of the Sheikhs and tribesmen who streamed into Aden to see us. We did not lack "an accurate and up-to-date knowledge of the Hinterland"; it was not, as stated, the lack of such knowledge which crippled our proceedings when the war broke out, but rather the failure of Government to listen to advice proffered, that brought us in 1915 to the brink of a disaster.

I regret I had no opportunity to refute these statements

H.H. Sir Abdul Karim, K.C.I.E.,
present-day Ruler of Lahej.

General Ali Sa'id Pasha
at his surrender in terms of the Armistice, 1918.

earlier, and in their author's lifetime. The Arabic rendering of *De mortuis* is contained in a tradition; "Avoid abusing your dead, for they were led to what they did." Sir Ali also was dead, and our inaction led to his untimely end. I am aware that our author wrote his treatise on his deathbed amid great suffering heroically endured. His proof-sheets passed through my hands, passed on by the Military Censor of Cairo. During his lifetime he accomplished great things. On his death his soul rests in Allah's keeping.

Major Raüf Bey took a part in the capture of Lahej on 5th July, 1915, and, captured by our troops there, was brought in by me to Aden. I picked him up on the sandy track as he was hurried along by Indians, who did not recognise his rank. He craved water, for the heat was oppressive. I emptied my water-bottle on his bare head. He kissed my hand and then fell unconscious A few days later in Aden he told me his story.

He was in command of a brigade of three battalions. He arrived in Lahej on Sunday morning, 4th July, with one of his own battalions and three of Husni Bey's Brigade. Of his two remaining battalions, one was left at Nobat Dukaim and the other at Zâïda. His brigade was No. 115. He left Mawia on Thursday, and arrived the same day at Al Dareja. The next day he came to Musemir; on Saturday he was at Nobat Dukaim, and at Lahej on Sunday. His battalions averaged from 350 to 500 men. The force had 22 guns, of which 15 were brought towards Lahej, but 6 only came into action. Of these, 2 were Q.F. *ubus*, and carried by mules; the rest were mountain-guns and mitrailleuses, and were man-handled. One brigade stayed in Mawia, and one battalion in Ta'izz. Ali Said Pasha was in supreme command, and was behind Lahej when the fight was proceeding. Raüf Bey was sent ahead to Lahej to prevent incendiarism. With the advancing forces were 3,000 Arab levies *Mujâhîdin*, of the Hujariya district; some Subehi and Yâfa'ï tribesmen; and all the fighting strength of the Haushabi, who attended in person. A battalion of Turks accompanied the Hujariya levies

under Abdul Kadir the Kaimakam. These traversed the W. 'Akkân, and joined the main body at Habil am Suweda.

The Arabs plundered and fired Nobat Dukaim and Zâîda. The Bey was strolling about in Lahej on Sunday afternoon when he was taken prisoner. He did not know he was opposing British forces at Lahej. He said the Turks would not come to Aden until heavily reinforced by Arabs. Their plan was to seize Lahej and win over the allegiance of the Sultan. "We were incensed," he said, "at the bombardment of Luhaiya, and so came down from Mawia." It was necessary to make a counter-movement to the Idrisi action (*sic*) at Luhaiya. They had not indented for reinforcements from the Hijaz. He denied there were any Germans in the Yemen. Some 40 Germans had come from Hodeida, but as no fighting could be promised them they went elsewhere. (It is known that these men came over from Massawa where German ships had sheltered at the opening of the war, for Italy did not enter the war against Germany till August, 1916.) I remember in March, 1915 discussing with an Italian officer the possibility of Italy's entrance into the arena. He gave three reasons against any immediate action: (i.) the snow-bound passes; (ii.) the earthquakes which had diverted thought to the home-land's troubles; and (iii.) that if Italy came in, the Germans were ready to invade Switzerland, who, unless she sat down under the breach of neutrality and joined the Boche against Italy, would meet the fate of Belgium.

Major Raüf did not think the Imam would actively join the Turks. He was at Shahâra, and was shy of entering Sana. The Major was at Bab al Mandab with his brigade. After the British bombardment of Sheikh Sa'id he was ordered to attack Perim, but refused compliance. He was relieved by Raf'at Bey and himself returned to Ta'izz. There were 35 battalions of Turks in the Yemen, or some 14,000 men, who hailed mostly from Syria.

. . . . . .

After the retirement of our troops on Aden, we took up a position at Khor Maksar, so as to safeguard the new

wireless station. We evacuated Sheikh 'Uthman, which the Turks and Arabs at once occupied. On July 21st, with reinforcements received from Egypt, we retook Sheikh 'Uthman. From that time to the Armistice of 1918 the presence of the Turks held up a large number of our troops in Aden. It may be said that we, too, bottled up the Turks on our front, but it was impossible for these, had they wished it, to retire elsewhere. There were a good number of Turks on the 'Asîr front, but they remained practically inactive. We had in April, 1915, concluded an agreement with the Idrisi by which he was to harass the enemy in his locality, but for various reasons the Idrisi did but little, without our initiative from the sea.

The military operations before Sheikh 'Uthman may be summed up as reconnaissances on both sides—small engagements and retirements of both assailants to their several positions. John Jacob of Jacobabad had a thorough insight into the Asiatic character. Let me quote from his *obiter dicta*, what is apposite to our own case.

> We want no fortifications. To be reduced to defend ourselves is tantamount to defeat in India. We must assume the superiority, be worthy of it, and keep it. After beating the enemy we must not go back a foot.

Tacitus, in his *Agricola*, too, speaks with no uncertain voice: *Neque exercitus neque ducis terga tuta esse*—"Retreat is fatal both to the army and to the General."

The Turkish General allowed caravans to pass freely into Aden, for on these he derived transit-dues. We suffered caravans to pass out, for the moral effect on our friendlies, who depended on Aden for their supplies, would otherwise have been disastrous. Thus both sides derived supplies, and also information each of the other's movements. The warfare may, therefore, be summed up as a *pax in bello*. The effect of these reconnaissances, which achieved no useful purpose, had a depressing

effect on our Protégés. A certain number of these went over to the Turks at Lahej. This was due largely to duress.

When he retired with us on Aden on 5th July the Abdali Sultan was accompanied by large numbers of his tribesmen, but many stayed behind to tend their fields, and some of these were impressed by the Turks. The majority of the Saiyids of al Waht, excepting the principal man, favoured the Turks. The Subehi tribesmen were employed by them to harass caravans. These raided caravans of both sides, and were chastised by the Turks. The Fadli Sultan, after our refusal to arm him, felt obliged to comply with the Pasha's summons to Lahej, and a few of his tribesmen actively helped the Turks, as did certain Yâfa'i clansmen. The Haushabi Sultan and his whole tribe accompanied the Turks into Lahej. The Pasha created him "Sultan of Lahej," but Ali Mâni' did nothing and, being craven-hearted, soon returned to his capital of Musemir. The tribesmen of Upper Yâfa', when summoned by the Sultan of Lahej as mercenaries to withstand a possible Turkish inroad, replied they would gladly assist him personally, if the Turks came down, but they said the war was one between two Governments and did not affect tribesmen, and they had no inclination to assist the British at Aden.

The Amir of Dala had called for our assistance. When no assistance was given, he in December, 1915, issued a manifesto to the effect that the Islamic Government was his Government, and the Sultan was his Caliph, to obey whom was obedience to Allah and His Prophet, while opposition was rank heresy. With Amir Nasr it was a case of *Ainama dârat al zigâga durna*, or, "Wherever the glass turns we turn." In other words, the Amir swam with the tide. One can scarcely blame him. Amir Nasr summed up the situation very neatly. *Kanâdir al atrâk akwa min taiyârât al Inkliz*, or, "The shoes of the Turks are stronger than the British aeroplanes!" He was seen in 1916 in Lahej, and was wearing Turkish dress. A local proverb says, *La taaman Bait al Kharafa wa lau halafa*—"Do not trust the House of Kharafa

even if he swear an oath!" Al Kharafa is the village which claims to be the birthplace of that House.

The majority of our stipendiaries remained anti-Turk. The 'Audhali Sultan was pleased to read our promises made to Arabs, and realised that the British were their best friends who scrupulously kept their promises. The turbulent tribesmen of the Shu'âr, who live on the Dala plateau, and are usually at variance with the Amir, offered to help the British against the tyranny of the Turks. One prominent Arab phrased his feelings thus: "If the Farangi order me to stand before his gun's mouth I'll do so.[1] May Allah destroy the Turks and give victory to the English"; but looking ahead, he added, "May Allah rather decree peace betwixt them!" The Muflahi Sheikh prayed for our victory. His brother out of curiosity went to Lahej. The influential Kadi of Behan admitted that Arabs owed all to the British, whom they should support. He hoped we should chase the Turks from the land of the Arabs. He proclaimed the same in every mosque and market-place.

The individualism of Arabs was a further fact precluding their entry on our side. This Arab trait may be aptly illustrated by their proverb: "If my sister play the harlot what is that to me?" In any case, whatever their sympathies, they would take no active part on our side so long as we remained at Sheikh 'Uthman.

The leader of the Zeidi tribe of Hashid, Sheikh Nâsir Mabkhût, wrote to Aden: "By God, we did not think the Turks could have stayed even one month in Lahej!" The Idrisi Saiyid ascribed our inaction, not to weakness, but to slackness. The Alawi Sheikh deplored the fall of Lahej, but ascribed it to God's decree. A Yâfa'i stipendiary exhorted us to go out in strength, for we lacked "vim" and did not press our attack; if we did so, Lahej would be ours and the Turks' retreat precipitated. The Meccan envoy who came to Adèn in November, 1916, was distressed to see our inaction at

[1] In 1913 I was travelling in our Hinterland and we gave the Arabs an exhibition of M.G. practice. To my query what they thought of the *sârûkh*, one Arab said: "He that made this 'cackler' (*muk'ak'a*) was a wise man: he that standeth before it is a fool."

Aden, and begged us to do something drastic to enlist Arab adhesion throughout the province, and to confront the insidious propaganda from a Turco-Germanic source.

Queer stories were circulated in Aden of nuptials arranged in the families of the Caliph and Wilhelm, who had embraced Islam. I do not say that Aden is more credulous than any other place, but it is interesting to note the Red Sea proverb: *Idha tasha kidhb al mujamma' dir*[1] *'Adan wa tasamma'*—"If you would hear a conglomeration of lies, come to Aden and keep your ears open."

In December, 1915, I advocated an advance on Lahej as a set-off against our failure to force the Dardanelles. A severe blow would be dealt to their prestige if the Turks were defeated in the Yemen. Nothing less would restore *our* prestige. The Turks had in 1907, so said the Arabs, jockeyed us out of our own Hinterland by superior diplomacy. If we failed to force them now, and their removal was the work of diplomatists only, our influence in Arabia would be still further diminished. How, then, after the war, could we expect to adjudicate between rival Arab claimants to the leavings of the Turk? If we took active measures ourselves, the Arabs would follow suit. They looked for a lead. It was a case of *Yâ lahmâ: haiya yâ lahmâ*—"Meat! Come and buy meat." This is the cry in Aden as the vender of camel's meat patrols the bazar with the led camel he is about to slaughter. Would-be eaters of its flesh follow, their mouths watering. Again, the vast sums spent to ensure independent Arab action would also be reduced. A *diplomatic* removal of the Turks from the Yemen would leave on our border a powerful and possibly contemptuous Arab ruler, the Imam, whose House since 1872 had longed for Arab expansion in an Arab land, but was let by the presence of the Turks. Now was his day of recovery.

Undoubtedly the course we first advocated was independent Arab action, ourselves supplying the material means. When the Arabs failed to act, that was the

[1] *Dir* is a word used in Khokha, near Mokha.

psychological moment for us to set the example. It was pointed out that when the Turks left the Yemen our border-line of 1902–1904 would *ipso facto* cease to exist. It was incumbent on us to defeat the Turks and march up to that border. This would rehabilitate us both in the eyes of the Imam and Idrisi, to say nothing of our Arab allies. The interior awaited British initiative but we never fully grasped the political significance of direct military action at Lahej. Our prestige, we were told, lay in France only, and Aden was one of those regrettable side-shows.

I want to make it clear that, given our lead, the mettle of Yemen's Arab soldiers would have been fully tested. In the Hijaz it was the ceaseless efforts of Lawrence and his band of officers, who aroused the martial instincts of that province, but I am sure that, even so, the Hijaz movement would have fallen flat had Allenby's victorious army not moved simultaneously and given the Arabs an impetus. The fighting material of the Yemen is far superior to anything the Hijaz can show. The Turks will bear me out here. The Italians, too, were enthusiastic on this point. When, late in the war, we enrolled the *Arab Legion*, which was thereafter styled the 1st Yemen Infantry, we did not test their martial instincts. We actually doubted their fidelity to our cause! Then why on earth did we enlist them?

The Zerânîk tribesmen who live in the country below Hodeida approached us in the beginning of the war, offering us their ports for sale. They were losers by the naval blockade and lacked ready cash with which to buy goods. Prices had been raised a thousandfold owing to the monopoly given by us to the Idrisi at his port of Meidi. The Zerânîk asked for rifles with which to fight their foes, the Turks. These tribesmen always gave the Turks much trouble; they were never amenable to foreign rule. They number some 25,000 souls. Apart from the House of Al Murâwa'a, whom I have before mentioned, the tribesmen give direct allegiance to a principal Saiyid, one Ahmed bin Yahya al Bahr, who lives at Mansuria, some five and a half hours' journey from Hodeida; while

another Saiyid lives at their port of Al Jah. There are two Head Sheikhs who live at Kokar and Huseinia.

Various other Sheikhs on the Red Sea littoral, feeling the pinch of scarcity, proffered their services. These services were not sincerely intended, and were politely declined. The Sheikh of Khokha, one of the principal places of export and served by a fleet of country-craft, came to Aden to complain of our lack of interest. "Our husband (the Turks) has divorced us and our paramour (the British) has given us the slip"—*Al zauj talak wa harab al sâhib*. Disappointed at Aden, the Zeranik Sheikhs went to Djibouti and made a similar offer to the French Governor, who declined the offer, and courteously reported the matter to us.

The blockade of Red Sea ports was carried out rigorously by the Royal Navy. It served a purpose in checking to some extent the traffic of arms; but as regards the stoppage of foodstuffs, its object miscarried. Owing to the indiscriminate carriage of goods by country-craft, the Idrisi port at first, Meidi, and then Jeizan, was the sole port thrown open to legitimate trade. The Idrisi held the monopoly and feathered his nest. His own dhows plied freely between his ports, which from north to south were: Al Birk, Al Wasm, Al Koz, Jeizan, Al Madaya, Ta'ashar, Sheikh Ikbal, Meidi, Shukeik, Al Habl, and 'Akm.

It was believed in certain circles that the food smuggled into Arabia was largely distributed for the consumption of the Turks. This view was not, I think, substantiated. The Arabs required the supplies, and they were the chief receivers. Doubtless a superfluity did trickle through to the Turkish troops, but not enough to affect their fighting powers. The naval blockade, and the monopoly enjoyed by the Idrisi in his northern port, greatly enhanced the prices of foods, and all the southern ports were severely handicapped. Food they must have, and they soon found a way to get it. The Red Sea coast is protected by reefs. Behind this shelter dhows coursed stealthily by night, unknown to the patrols and mostly *ungetatable*. Not only dhows, but land-caravans, brought down supplies.

The tall prices they had to pay incensed the Arabs. The work of the naval blockade was in a large measure rendered abortive by Arab tactics. "Make the Arabs suffer," was the naval retort, "and they will then join us and fight the Turks who have caused them this inconvenience." This was a copy-book maxim, truer in theory than in practice. Arab dhows were almost daily chased by our boats, and brisk firing ensued on both sides. This should have proved the failure of the blockade, and shown that the Arabs were the losers. The Arabs rightly exclaimed: *Sâhib mukhassir 'adû mubîn*—"Your friend who touches your purse is really your foe." The Navy had a stiff proposition before them. The ships they employed were too large for the purpose. It was only towards the latter end of the war that these vessels were replaced by trawlers. The ports to be watched were numerous. The principal ones from Bab Al Mandab to the North were Dhubâb, Wahiga, and Am Kadaha, of the Hakmi tribe; Mokha, Yakhtal, and Am Zahari, of the Zahari tribe; Maushij, Am Khokha, Kitâba, and Haima, of the Hais folk; Am Muteina, Am Fazza, and Mugeilis, of the Kureish; Am Jâh, Ghuleifika, and Am Taïf, of the Zerânîk. I am referring to the ports within the Southern Patrol of the Red Sea. The ports of the Northern Patrol were equally under naval surveillance, but the political oversight was Egypt's.

The Turks, as I have said, got supplies from various sources. The country itself was tapped, and furnished the ordinary means of sustenance. For extras they depended mainly on the caravans into and out of Aden, and in some measure on dhows which sailed from Aden bound for Somali ports. These did not all go straight to port of destination, but took oftentimes another course and dumped down a part of their cargoes in Red Sea ports.

Our foremost task was to have beaten the Turks in front of us at Aden, and to have winked at the overflow of supplies that reached them through Arab sources. We knew that a portion of the supplies that were shipped to the Idrisi's port did percolate through into Turkish hands. The amount was negligible. I once remonstrated with

Saiyid Mustafa on this leakage. "Think you," he said, "that the Idrisi's Minister loves the Turks because he passes on your goods to them? No, by Allah, he is only keen to do a deal. He remains, in truth, your good friend, and, *Wallahi!* he loathes the Turks." The act must be condoned because the motive power was other than love of the foe! Mustafa was ever a *farceur*! My remonstrances were useless. Does not a *Tradition* say, "Actions must be judged by motives"? The Arab loves filthy lucre.

Al Hariri writes: "Were it not impiety, I would exclaim money is all powerful!"—*Lau la 'l tuka, la kultu jallat kudrat-hu.* The concluding words are applicable to Allah alone. Compare the "Almighty" dollar!

We concluded two treaties with the Idrisi, the first in April, 1915, and the other in January, 1917. We supplied him freely with small arms and ammunition. We gave a special assignment to the northern tribesmen of Rijâl al Ma', whose allegiance to him was otherwise problematical, and is so still. The Idrisi's influence is chiefly on the sea-board. It has ever been so, since the early days of the Sherifs of Abu 'Arîsh, whom we meet in the third chapter.

The Idrisi received from us four 5-inch howitzers and thirty 15-pounders. After much persuasion he sent down his men to be trained in gunnery, but was thereafter reluctant to use the guns. He preferred those which the Italians had given him in 1911. I have seen his guns, some lying on the beach in Jeizan and others parked in his storehouses. The second treaty related mainly to the Farasan Islands, which he had wrested in January, 1915, from the handful of Turks in occupation. Here he was afraid to hoist his own flag, and to hoist ours was anathema to him. He told me he was sure we should win the war against Germany, but he was not so sure of the fate of their allies the Turks. He knew we were in the past friendly to the latter, and perchance after the war we should revert to our time-honoured policy and allow them to remain in the Yemen. That would mean perpetual pinpricks at their hands if he opposed them

now. "Co-operate with me," he said, "and show me the sincerity of your purpose by ousting the enemy from the Yemen, and I will then operate against them *con amore*. If I hoist my flag on the islands, the Turks will never forgive me. If I hoist yours, they will say I have sold the islands." The Idrisi had received no flag from Italy, and this, he said, had mitigated the wrath of Turkey, who merely called him *mutamarrid*, or one who had strayed from the fold of Islam and was recoverable.

He was precluded by the spirit of this treaty from importing arms and ammunition from any Power other than ourselves. It was criminal to exercise no check on the import. Against this restriction he kicked. He had always been able to supply his wants from Djibouti or from Massawa. Arms he would always require, and surely three Powers could supply more than could one. I told him that he should not think too imperially, and I recalled their proverb, *Râkib al jamalain afshakh*—"He splits his thighs who rides two camels at one time."

To-day the Idrisi expects discriminate treatment against all other Arabs and especially against the Imam, whom he declares was the avowed friend of Turkey throughout the war. It is idle for him to expect our exclusive favours. He had often quoted the proverb that denounces partial dealings—*La tukahhil 'ain wa 'ain la*, or, "Do not put the collyrium all into one eye!"

The case of the Idrisi was not that of the Imam. The Idrisi lived on the beach, and was accessible to our ships and officers. The Imam lived 150 miles inland, and was surrounded by a cordon of Turkish troops and by German and Turkish propaganda. Regarded geographically, it was almost impossible to win over the Imam. As to the Imam's attitude to us—the spirit was willing but the flesh was weak. One has only to study, even cursorily, the history of the Imam, and his past dealings with the Turks, to be assured that it is *he*, more than any other Arab ruler, that can be styled the set foe to the Turks. He joined them in 1911 for a specific reason. His action was praiseworthy from the standpoint of Islam. Is that

to prejudice him to-day, with us, who, with the exit of the Turks in 1918, are the one Power interested in fostering peace in the Yemen? If the Idrisi, so accessible to us, and under the cover of our ships, found it impolitic to fight the Turks without our lead, *à fortiori* was it difficult for the Imam to move, tucked up, as he was, in his hills inland.

The Idrisi throughout the war was interested in preventing the Imam from becoming our friend. With the Turks gone, both Arab rulers aspire to become the residuary legatees of his goods. The Idrisi was the first to come in; if the Imam had followed suit, the Idrisi's pickings would have been proportionately smaller; hence his anxiety, and his policy of estranging the Imam.

He even denied the Imam's claim to Hodeida, though he admitted it was the key to Sana. At one time he asked us to capture Hodeida, and when we declined to give the lie to our fixed policy of self-effacement he suggested he should himself take it! To achieve his end he wooed the Imam's principal tribesmen of the Hâshid and Bakîl, and asked us to provide the necessary funds to enlist their services. These folk have the mercenary spirit, and follow the man with the longest purse. He enlisted a few of them. They took his money, fired a few shots, and decamped. Their heart was with their legitimate master, the Imam.

The Idrisi declined all advances made by the Imam. I hold a brief for both these chiefs, for it was I who was chiefly responsible in securing their adhesion in the war. The Imam comes from an historic House; the Idrisi is of mushroom growth, and an interloper in these parts. When the war started, the Idrisi's borders as claimed by him to the North and South were at *Am Birik* and *Habl* respectively. Above Birik he was likely to impinge upon Hijaz claims; below Habl he would tread on what was potentially the Imam's heritage.

The Idrisi's policy was to keep on good terms with those on his extreme borders, where his influence was shadowy; and to keep an iron hand on those in his vicinity, lest they became too strong for him. His

mercenaries he required to work far afield. They would be useful in extending his borders, and if they turned contumacious and retained what they had won, it was better so than nearer home. The mercenaries' hunting-ground was fixed at Luhaiya, Hodeida, and even so far afield as Bab al Mandab, colloquially termed Buweib, or the Little Gate. He would depute them also into the interior of 'Asîr, where the interests of Ibn 'Aïd were paramount and antagonistic.

The Idrisi derided the Imam's claims to the lowlands of the Yemen, the heritage of the Imam's ancestors. His voracity was increased tenfold by the knowledge that Kunfidha had been handed over temporarily to King Husein, and that this latter had deputed Saiyid Yahya bin Abdul, Rahman *Mutawwif* of the Yemen (styled in Aden familiarly "Greenmantle"), to secure letters from the Hâshid and Bakîl calling for Sherifial intervention. King Husein and sons have Gargantuan mouths —all is grist to their mill.

The Idrisi blamed the Imam for not breaking his pact with the Turks, and naïvely added that "if the son of 'Hamid ud Din' would seek a way, Allah would help him!" The Idrisi's adherence to us was certainly a counterpoise to the Turks, who had sought to summon the Yemen to a Jihad. He himself made capital of the fact that he held up a Turkish force and prevented their combining with the forces against us in Aden. The Turks in 'Asîr were, however, in clover, and not likely to go south, nor indeed did Ali Sa'id want them there.

The Imam's inaction I have explained. A further cause was his lack of accurate knowledge of what we had promised to the Idrisi. It is the old story of Isaac and the expectant attitude of his sons Jacob and Esau. The difference lay in this, that Esau knew the worst and had leisure to mature his future plans. The Imam could only conjecture, and jealousy exaggerated the favours enjoyed by his rival. A complete despair of winning our favours would have left him the consolation of knowing the worst and making other arrangements. His neutrality, in spite of his being sandwiched in by the Turkish military

command, proved his strength, and revealed the weakness of the Turks. His service to us as a passive spectator was no less valuable to our cause than the half-hearted activities of the Idrisi. The latter from time to time, and when aided by our warships, made spasmodic efforts against the enemy on his front, and then fell back on diplomacy. Many of the Turks deserted to his camp, and were permitted to settle in freedom in the bazars of Jeizan. He would not hand these over to us for custody. He was "putting his money on both ways," walking circumspectly, and looking prospectively.

The moral of this war in the Yemen may be thus tersely expressed. Our failure to defeat the Turks before Aden was the supreme cause of our loss of prestige in the country. Surely British prestige is one and indivisible, and its loss equally deplorable, wherever we Britons be?

Gallipoli proved a side-show. Mesopotamia was one, too, until General Maude, backed by the War Office, took over the conduct of affairs, when this front became equally important with that of Palestine. On these two fronts the Turk received his *quietus*. Their defeat and demoralisation in the Yemen would have made us the undisputed arbiters of the destinies to-day of all the peoples of the Jazirat al 'Arab.

The respective parts played in the war by the "Arab Kings" may be summed up as follows:

Husein of the Hijaz, thanks to Lawrence and his lieutenants, and inspired by Lord Allenby's success, was compelled to act against the Turks. One of his sons, however, was actively engaged throughout in counter-mining the rise to power of Ibn Sa'ud of Nejd, himself our ally.

Ibn Sa'ud was willing to act against the Turks, but lacked arms and ammunition. It was thought impolitic to give him any, lest his fanatical *Ikhwân* (Brethren) should dominate our friend of Hijaz. Ibn Sa'ud had every right to resent Amir Abdallah's aggressions. He routed the Hijaz forces on one memorable occasion, and then showed his strength, and his friendship to us, by

repressing the Brethren, who would otherwise have repeated history, when they occupied Mecca in 1804.

The Idrisi put up half-hearted attacks here and there, and then fell back on diplomacy.

The Imam declared his neutrality and practised it.

All said and done, the Kings of Arabia had some excuse for their omissions to act.

We know the story of the three bulls, white, black, and red, which grazed peacefully in the meadow till one day there appeared to them a lion, who, unable to overawe them in their collective strength, thus addressed the bulls: "We see but the white bull, whose colour is a distinguishing one, whilst my colour is like yours. Let me eat the white one, so that the forest may remain for you two alone." They assented. After an interval the lion addressed the red bull: "My colour is like thine; let me eat the black bull," and it was so. Again, the lion took up his parable to the red bull: "Thee I now must eat." Before his death the red bull cried: "I was eaten on the day that the white bull was eaten." So with the Arab Kings. They all feared the aftermath of the war. Perhaps in some measure this dread at the back of their minds tempered their personal efforts. All of these Arab Bulls desired the disappearance of the Turks, their fellow Moslems—yes, even the neutral Imam—but they felt concern at the ulterior aims of the British Lion.

None of the Arab Kings relished the possibility of British annexation, or even of a British mandate, after the war had set down its burdens.

I have passed over the bombardment of Jedda in June, 1916, as also many little incidents of the war in Aden. The bombardment came as a shock to India, but then, India and Egypt regarded the Arab movement through different glasses. I think it was a mistake. It was urged by the Arabs of the Hijaz. I was talking to a Jedda citizen shortly afterwards, and asked him how he liked the temporary stay there of British and other agencies. He replied it was a case of "Hobson's choice," or, as he put it, *Man shal ummana hua 'ammuna*—

"Who snatches away my mother becomes my step-father."

The Kaaba was stormed in the days of Abdul Malik, the Ummaiyad Caliph. Al Hajjâj in 73 A.H. besieged Ibn al Zubair in Mecca, and his catapult discharged stones at the House of God. This was followed by a great thunderstorm.

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On the declaration of the Armistice, Turkish forces surrendered to us, some at Aden and others in the Red Sea, both at Hodeida and at Luhaiya. Ali Sa'id Pasha's entry into Aden took the form of a triumphal procession. Crowds met and cheered him. He had fought with clean hands. He had always held his own. For over three years he had occupied Lahej, an enemy country. He was a soldier first and foremost, but an extremely capable administrator, and in the course of his sojourn down south his personality had won him many friends—*Palmam qui meruit ferat.*

The sands had run out. After 288 years the Turks once more marched to the sea, and left the shores of the Verdant Yemen behind them. I am sorry to see them go. With all their failings they are a chivalrous people, and their knowledge of the Arabs was unique. Some thought them tyrannical, as some croakers do think our rule in India is tyrannical. The old woman of Syracuse prayed her gods to preserve the life of the tyrant Dionysius lest he die and be followed by a worse! We shall presently see how the Arab successors are faring who have fallen into the heritage of the "Arwâm."

. . . . . .

"Surely to every nation its set term; none shall survive it, nor shall any *prevent* it" (Koran).

Some few side-lights on the Idrisi Saiyid may not come amiss. Saiyid Muhammad bin Ali bin Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Idris, to give him his full style, was a remarkable man. "His Moorship" was of magnificent physical

proportions, and he carried himself regally. His smile was bewitching. As said of the Prophet, " His laughter was just a smile." His attire was plain but ever cleanly. His visage was black but comely. His people gave him the lofty style of " Commander of the Faithful and Director of the Religion of Allah." His earlier choice was " Ruler of Sabia in the Pure Idrisian Country." He disapproved of our addressing him as " Amir 'Asîr," or Ruler of 'Asîr, for he believed this style might irritate other Arab pretenders. Later, when he was sore over the loss of Kunfidha, he made a complete *volte-face*, and thought the words, " Ruler of Sabia and its dependencies," a trifle derogatory. People would think he had no higher ambitions *vis-à-vis* the Turks. I then reverted to " Maula 'Asîr," or Lord of 'Asîr; surely this would whet his appetite and give him an incentive to act! Saiyid Muhammad gladly swallowed the bait. Had we not thereby committed ourselves to a recognition of his rights in Kunfidha, which lies on the Hijaz-'Asîr border?

Before my first interview with the Idrisi I had asked his Minister, Ba Sahi, to describe his master's appearance; did he at all resemble his cousin Saiyid Mustafa? " He is a bit uglier," was the ingenuous reply, phrased in Egypt's patois—*akbah shuweiya!* Now Mustafa, who lives at Luxor, in Egypt, is a handsome fellow of cheery and winsome ways! He took a leading part in negotiating the first Idrisi treaty in April, 1915.

The Idrisi at first would receive his guests after nightfall only. I ridiculed the procedure. We landed at Jeizan as a thief in the night. He excused himself, saying that he had to pander to a whim of his tribesmen's. I questioned his influence over them. The Idrisi winced, and then with his inimitable smile asssured me all would come right in time—*Insha Allah.* Latterly, visitors landed normally and even rode in broad daylight to Sabia and other places. One told me the Italians had never landed on Idrisi shores. The King of Hijaz derided these midnight meetings, but, then, Husein did not love Muhammad!

At an interval the sonorous cadence of his voice thrilled one. As the Arabs put it, a man's character lies hidden beneath his tongue. His Arabic was excellent, as became a student of Al Azhar. At times he would become over-excited, and raise his voice as a bull of Bashan. During one long peroration, in which he criticised our inaction, I threw myself back on the sofa and endured. It was late at night, and I had to return to the ship. When he had finished I rose to go. "Stay," he said, "I have still three hours' matter to discuss." "And I have another three," I replied, "but I have not dined. To-morrow, Allah willing, we will continue."

When I ventured the remark that his Minister allowed supplies to go inland to the Turks, he said the matter was outside his ken; that he personally was a religious man, and left commercial affairs to his Minister. I quoted the tradition, "Your adviser should be trusted," and he seemed relieved. He contrasted himself with me, who was a *sahib al siyâsa*, or politician. Once, when he was busy with State affairs ashore, I put out to sea for an hour's trip to Am Birik, and Bâ Sahi was with me. The Idrisi looked surprised as the warship slipped her moorings, but recovered, and quietly to my clerk said, "It is all right, this is no treacherous Government with whom I am dealing." A tribesman of this port, while discussing in a group the British Government, said, "If Britannia goes, which God forbid, know, my brother, that justice, too, has gone!"

I asked the Idrisi why he took no steps to repair his pier-head. "Look you," he said, "at the despicable folk who have lived in Jeizan for sixty years and built no mosque. How, think you, they would build a pier?"

The women of Abu 'Arîsh and vicinity are said to be passing beautiful. The saw runs: *Man râh Abî Arîsh raja' bila rîsh*—"Who goes to Abu 'Arîsh returns without 'feathers,'" for even his clothes would be pawned to buy these damsels gifts!

Saiyid Muhammad Ali the Idrisi has recently gone to he Mercy of Allah. He was a good friend, and a staunch

believer in the good faith of the British nation. His son Ali reigns in his stead.

" Verily amid gardens and rivers shall the pious dwell. In the seat of truth, in the presence of the all-potent King " (Koran liv. 54 & 55).

# CHAPTER TEN

## OF TURKISH PERSONALITIES

*" Others form man ; I only report him."*

### I. General Ali Sa'id Pasha.

On his surrender to us, I came into close touch with the Turkish Commander, both in Aden and afterwards in Cairo and Helouan, and I would describe the personality of the man and his magnetic attraction. I have explained why he was impelled to bring his troops down towards Aden. There was a flutter in civilian Aden as he marched south. A Turkish Staff officer told a friend that supplies had run short and he looked forward to cool draughts of whisky when Aden was occupied ! The remark gathered volume like a rolling snowball. Had not Ali Sa'id, too, sent in word he would assist at the next Friday prayer in the 'Aidrûs Mosque ! The descent of the Turks and the occupation of our territory served a useful purpose. It needed adversity to test our allies and discover our enemies, and the Turkish incursion proved the firm place we held in the esteem of our Arab allies, despite the fateful regression of 1907. So, too, Egyptians, in the mouth of their poet Hafiz Bey Ibrahim, hailed the *sequelae* of the affair at Denshawai, and proved that there is a soul of good in things evil.

Would that Cromer would stay with us for aye,
And his halter encircle every neck !
Our flogged and slain become our martyrs ;
May his gifts to Egypt be repeated from time to time !
So shall we learn to tear away the shrouds that enwrap us
And step forth from our graves into a new world !

The Koran says, " Perchance you hate a thing, but in reality it is for your welfare." General Ali Sa'id Pasha

fought so cleanly that he has fairly won the *sobriquet* of the "Turkish Bayard." His chivalry, or *maruwwa*, was a marked feature of his warfare. When one of our planes crashed in Lahej, the Pasha wrote a note to Aden eulogising the heroism of the airmen and offering to send in their bodies for burial. His personality was a lodestone which not only attracts the needle, but infuses therein the virtue to attract others. The whole country-side was spellbound under his charms. Somalis came over from their country, or trickled through Aden to join his ranks. The Somali loves the fight, and, like an Irishman, is not careful to what side he inclines. Had we wished their services they might have joined us. The brothers 'Umairi, who were of an 'Aulaki stock, domiciled in Lahej, were attracted by this charmer, and became a constant thorn in our side. This Circassian soldier had inspired them all with the belief that it was the call of Islam fighting with its back to the wall. His ceaseless flow of proclamations told of the invincibility of Islam. His refrain was the Koranic consolation, "How oft, with Allah's permission, hath a small force defeated a mighty one. Yea, Allah is on the side of the patient folk." Islamic flags were despatched to many of our friendlies. I secured one of these, fashioned in silk, but its surrender to the infidel resulted in a night-raid on Bir Ahmed, and the capture of the Sheikh, who was kept in Lahej but treated courteously. Full of faith in his cause, the Pasha was activity personified; no Elijah was he who came and sat down under a juniper tree. The Arab says of the Turk: "Beware of the Turk if he begins to plot"—*Ta 'awwadh al Turk lâ dabbar.*[1]

The desultory warfare before Sheikh 'Uthman meant the blood-shedding of Moslem by Moslem, and one of our Generals wrote deprecating this waste of life, and suggested the General's surrender. The reply came straight from the shoulder: "I am a soldier and no politician. My rôle is war, and to it I have been bred, and under its directions I serve. Surrender is impossible. We are all, men and officers, here to fight, and are ready for

[1] The word *lâ*, meaning *if*, often appears in their doggerel verse.

action at all times, and nothing can check us save the attainment of our goal. We glory in death, and this world's vanities grip us but feebly. We list to the commands of our Caliph-Sultan and will defend our holy country with our lives. What boots it to us the rebellion of the Sherif of Mecca and the Idrisi, who represent but a fraction of the hosts of Islam? They must divine the result of their ill-advised action. I am little concerned with the cutting-off of my communications. I knew of this at the outset, but my resolve was firm, and I can fight for another three years, for I have no lack of arms, supplies, or money. The valour of my men suffices me, and Allah's grace encompasses me. Do not grieve over the lives of Moslems, for soon we shall hear of the fall of London and of Paris." He was a man. I once remarked to him on his administrative skill; but he quickly rejoined, " May Allah forgive you! I am only a soldier."

He built roads and bridges and erected a hospital for his men in Lahej. He elaborated schemes for a new land-assessment. He derided the idea of a railway from Hodeida to Sana, which was solely a strategic line and intended to dominate the country. He drew for me his own ideas of railroads throughout the Tihama, and of roads that would be feeders to these lines and tap the resources of the country.

European politics interested him, but how, he asked, could Turkey remain on good terms with us so long as we had leaders such as Lloyd George, Asquith, and Grey? He admitted England's old-time friendship, and the Germans he loathed. Since, however, we, at France's instance, had been drawn into an *entente* with Turkey's bugbear Russia, Turkey had no option but to join the Germans, who were Russia's arch enemies. He was a Young Turk but not of Enver's gang. Service in Irak had convinced him that the policy of the C.U.P. was detrimental to Turkey's best interests. The times had changed. The Ottomanisation of Turkey was an error. The Empire was composed of divers nationalities. It was absurd to coerce the Arabs, as Enver had proposed. Were they not brothers in Islam? .. There was room for

all under their flag. He would return to Stamboul to work for the rehabilitation of the Turks, who were still a nation to be counted with. He hoped the British would assist Turkey, for otherwise he believed we should feel the pinch in the coming years in India, whose teeming Moslems revered the Turkish Caliph. King Husein was a well-meaning old man, but totally unfitted to direct the Moslem world. In the Yemen he regarded Imam Yahya as the pick of the bunch, though a fanatic. He was the one straight man in the province, and yet he (the Pasha) did not love him, and the Imam had failed to understand the value of the Turks who had propped him up since the pact of 1911.

Ali Sa'id was looking through Turkish spectacles. It was hard for him to grasp the Imam's outlook.

The Pasha advised us to take the Shâfa'i peoples under our wing. He deprecated our entering the country, for this would be an instrument in the hands of the Zeidi Imam to herald our occupation of the country, and would still further embitter the relations between Zeidi and Shâfa'i.

As to our future relations with the Arabs, who had allied themselves to the Turks during their stay in Lahej, Ali Sa'id advised us, as a friend, to proclaim a general amnesty. This would enhance our reputation for clemency, especially if we acted rapidly and prior to the Peace Conference.

After the return of the Sultan Abdul Karim to his capital we induced this ruler himself to proclaim an amnesty. It was interesting to note the attitude of the Imam of Sana, who wrote a friendly letter to Aden as an advocate of the unfriendly Saiyids of Al Waht, who had deserted their Sultan of Lahej and leagued themselves to the Turkish Pasha. The Imam's letter suggested to some a piece of unwarranted interference. I saw in it the zeal of a peacemaker who, the turmoil of war and disruption over, would invite all Arabs to the advantages of peace and friendly connections. Imam Yahya's letter disclosed his friendly attitude to us. He was no intriguer behind our backs, but, with us, would strive

for the renovation of the country. The Imam's slogan is " Peace and development." How have we responded to one whose house even in Haines' day sought our alliance and advice?

As to those of our stipendiaries who had sought the Pasha's alliance, Ali Sa'id stigmatised Amir Nasr of Dala as an idiot, a vacillator who never knew his own mind. Ali Mâni', the Haushabi Sultan, was a craven-hearted man, but useful to the Turks, who forced his alliance as he passed through Musemir, he protesting he was a British Protégé.

Discussing the Fadli Sultan Husein bin Ahmed, he said : " People wondered why I came to Lahej. I was no fool. I knew I could not capture Aden, for you had command of the sea. I did not even propose to rush Sheikh 'Uthman." He then told me what I have narrated in the preceding chapter of the difficulties of supplies, and his reluctance to offend the Arabs on the Turkish side of the border. " Had your forces," he said, " been more mobile you might have come out and captured my guns. I sent for the Fadli, for I was then able to tap the resources of his country, and I got most of my supplies from Abyan and Shukar (both in the Fadli country) ; from Ahwar of the Lower Aulaki ; and even from so far off as Makalla." *All these supplies emanated originally from Aden.* We were well aware of the leakage, and suffered it for reasons I have already explained.

The Pasha protested that he received no assistance in the war from the Imam, who vehemently opposed the Turkish assault on Lahej owing to the existence of his treaty with this ruler. It was possible, however, that the Imam did send supplies to those Turks and Arabs who were operating against his rival, the Idrisi. His testimony to the part played by the Imam is interesting, and its source carries conviction.

As to Turkey, the General said that Moslems wanted a King of Islam. All Indian Moslems, therefore, looked to Muhammad VI. Ali Husein of the Hijaz did not fill the bill, nor did any other Moslem ruler. He realised that the British had conquered Mesopotamia, Palestine, and Syria,

but he hoped these tracts would remain under Turkish suzerainty, and that between Turkey and England friendly relations would be re-established. The action of Italy in Tripoli should give us a precedent. Italy in her wisdom allowed there the suzerainty of the Caliph. She will retain supreme temporal power by this wise concession to spiritual headship.

"Islam," he said, "is not dead. All countries revere the Caliph and will give trouble to their Christian rulers, if not in this generation, then certainly in the next. Turkey and England should bury the hatchet and unite in the work of progress." War was proved useless, said this militarist; scientific irrigation, schools, roads, and friendly commerce—this was the programme he would now live to further.

He believed the Moslems of Bokhara and Khiva might become Britain's fast friends. Freed from the Russian Imperial influences, these Central Asia tracts were looking for an alliance, and had approached Afghanistan. "If all these were Britain's friends, and with them the Central Asian Turks, *a mighty barrier would be formed against Bolshevik aggression.*" If Great Britain should turn the Turks down, the Pasha thought they would be obliged to throw in their lot with Bolshevism. Ali Sa'id was a sane statesman with prophetic insight.

As for the Arabian provinces of the Yemen and the Hijaz, he thought not a single Turkish soldier should hazard his life there. These provinces brought no financial return to Turkey, and were a continual source of religious unrest. I shall explain later the reasons for the comparative sterility of the Yemen under the Turks. The blame rests on the Turkish administration, its aims and its fears. As Dr. Boteler said of the strawberry—and I here substitute the province of the Yemen—"Doubtless God might have made a better country, but doubtless God never did!" The same is said, though more forcibly, of the Prophet; "The Merciful One has created none like Muhammad; and by certain knowledge he never will." Do they not thus limit the Holy One of Israel?

Coming to the question of the Caliphate, the Pasha

ridiculed the glib prattle of Turkish *Ulema*. He said these folk would call him a *Kafir* if they learnt his views He thought the spiritual line of Caliphs long since extinct This accords with the view of the theologian Al Shâfa'i, who said that the orthodox Caliphs were four—Abu Bakr, Umar, 'Uthman, and Ali—yea, five, for he added the name of Umar bin Abdul Aziz, of the B. Ummaya.

Ali Sa'id believed that Muhammad VI lost much by insisting on his office of Caliph. His pressing duty was to settle down in Anatolia, and there, if in close alliance with Great Britain, and financially aided by her, or possibly by America, a new Turkey would be born. Constructive work within a resuscitated Turkey was the first question of the day.

Palestine and Syria he styled a *damnosa hereditas*. Growth and prosperity had been debarred to the Turks by reason of their unwieldy Empire. As *Caliph*, Muhammad VI could not lean for support on any Christian power. It was quite otherwise if he were merely Sultan of Turkey. The Caliphate, he said, might go to the Hijaz overlord, or to any other aspirant for high honours! Surely a sage, this Circassian General! To-day we view the division of the office. A new Caliph reigns; the kingdom has passed over to the National Government. Mustapha Kemal has taken Islam back to its beginnings, but I think that many will agree with Ali Sa'id that a "King" would have cut more ice with Moslems generally. In one respect Mustapha Kemal and Co. have truckled to the democratic spirit of the age.

The Pasha blamed Talaat, Enver, and Jamal for their Young Turk proclivities, which had ruined Turkey. Turkey had all to gain by remaining neutral. After three years of the war, when America came in and Germany's power was crippled, Turkey might well have stepped in on the Allies' side, and supplied the man-power instead of America. The latter might have assumed the rôle of financier to the mutual advantage of both parties. He believed Turkey was sufficiently strong in man-power to have remained neutral, had it not been for that dog Enver—Allah bring his soul to hell!

Général Ali Said Pacha
10/5/1919.

The Circassian soldier who commanded the Turks before Aden.

The Sultan of Turkey, he said, was a puppet in Enver's hands.

He wanted to have the photos of all the Generals who opposed him before Aden, and mine also, for he thought of compiling a history of the war in the Yemen. I hope the Pasha will write his memoirs ; they would be intensely interesting. He chafed over his detention in Helouan. He asked me to picture what would have happened had he refused to credit the orders for his surrender, which had been passed to him through Aden. Could we have pursued him up-country? The country was on his side, and his resources would have lasted another year. He chose to credit our announcement of the Armistice, which Tevfik and his party at Sana had discredited, and his correcter attitude entitled him to special treatment, he believed. Tevfik Pasha and Mahmud Nadim had circulated libellous stories of his surrender to the British in consideration of money paid. His own surrounding knew better, and, whatever doubts they might have had of his integrity, these were surely now dissipated when they learnt of his great humiliation at British hands!

Of Irak my friend spoke as certainly. It had been a source of weakness, and, even if Turkish suzerainty were restored, they would require loans, and so for all practical purposes the country would be under mortgage to those who advanced the loans. These words should reassure those of us who scent a danger from the side of Turkey to King Faisal, when shorn of British protection. If left alone, as Faisal really wishes to be left, he would return to the Turkish fold and invite the suzerainty of the Turkish Caliph. Remember, please, the words of this Turkish statesman when I come to chapter xii.

At my first interview, Ali Sa'id received me with marked cordiality. A Turk is the most courteous of beings, and small wonder he is styled the " first gentleman " in the Middle East. A cup of coffee was set before me. Holding it up to my lips, I told the following story : " Before the Turks left Mawia to attack Lahej I was seated with the Wahdi Sultan of Bir Ali. We discussed the German use of poison gas, and my friend asked why we did not

use it. When I said the English would not stoop to such devilry, he smiled and said, ' War is deceit.' He warned us not to go out against the Turks, for the days were hot, and, again, such a procedure would be undignified. The plan he proposed was to send a trustworthy messenger to put poison in the Pasha's coffee or ever he did the like to me!' I spoke chidingly to the Sultan, who laughed immoderately and said: ' Arabs are all dogs, and I am an Arab myself! ' "

Poison plays a major part in Arab transactions. The Amir of Dala, Ali bin Mukbil, suffered with small-pox in Dala, where he died in 1886. Arabs, however, attributed his end to poison inserted with the leaves of *Kat*, to which he was heavily addicted. His son, Amir Shaïf, while proceeding to the Delhi Durbar in 1911, died on the way of pneumonia. Folk said he was poisoned by myself, the poison being put into his sherbet! So, too, that recluse and saint, the Sultan of Yâfa' al-Kâra, was said to have succumbed to a dose of poison. His animosity to the British deterred him from coming to Aden to draw the arrears of his stipend. His tribesmen lost in consequence their perquisites, and so planned their ruler's end.

The Indians often resorted to this device. " Poison damsels " were used in old times against King Chandragupta; and an Indian Queen sent such a gift to Alexander the Great, but the manœuvre was frustrated by Aristotle.

I finished this yarn and immediately drained my cup. The Pasha smiled grimly and capped my story as follows: " When my troops entered Sheikh 'Uthman I felt a-thirst, and, coming to the first well, I bade a soldier let down his cup for a draught. He, however, begged me to refrain, saying the English had poisoned the waters. ' If,' said I, ' the English follow this custom, I will be the first to die. Give me to drink! ' I drank, and here I am to-day, with Allah's permission."

Although he was comfortably housed in a spacious quarter in the Crater of Aden, the Pasha felt keenly his detention, for he was essentially a man of action. *Al habs*

*habs wa lau fil junaina*, the distich runs, or "A prison is still a prison even if you are quartered in Paradise." I tried to cheer his solitude, but in vain. He would pull himself together by an effort, and smile through his grief and *ennui*, but would at once relapse into a dull apathy. "I have fought you for over three years," he said, "and I have never been beaten. I have surrendered on the lines of the Armistice, and look you at my disgrace! *Inna lillah wa inna ilaihi raji'ûn.*" This is Koranic consolation to those who see the will of God in every hap and mishap. Looking at the Pasha's face of despair, I recalled the words of the Koran: "And he was as if the birth of a daughter had been announced to him!"

On the re-entrance of our troops into Lahej, after the surrender of the Turks, the following two distiches were found inscribed in prominent places. The first is classical:

*Inna âthâranâ tadullu 'alaina: fa anḍhuru b'adana ila 'l âthâr.*
These are our works, which prove what we have done;
Look, therefore, at our works when we are gone.

And again, this music-hall ditty, with reference to the disappearance of the Sultan of Lahej with the English at the retreat after the affair of Lahej on 5th July, 1915:

The ass went off with the hyæna;
The hyæna did not return—nor yet the ass!

As I have stated, the warfare in the tract between Lahej and Sheikh 'Uthman consisted of a series of reconnaissances on either side. The Arab loves *impromptu* verse, and the following doggerel was sung by a Fulesi Sheikh after the fight at Al Imad on 16th March, 1916. The poetaster was one of our friendlies, and his lay was a trifle sarcastic.

To-day, O Merciful One, how goodly a concourse!
I ask Thee to give victory, O Thou of exalted rank!
The British Army sallied forth into the land of the Arabs,
They resembled nothing other than water-bearing clouds.
I saw warriors carrying arms, machine-guns, and guns well-charged,

And Blood coursed as water gushes from the mouths of the skin-bags.
The Mausers (°303) wrought havoc—and their swords;
O army of my Sultan, what a night! What a run!
The foe retreated, making four marches in one!
None in the world can withstand the Mustachioed People;
They advanced, and their tracks were cut up and impassable.

Ali Sa'id Pasha, when repatriated, became Military Governor of Stamboul, and he gave me a standing invitation to his home. He was arrested by the Allies for Nationalist views too strongly expressed. The long deferred Peace Treaty had made him desperate. I believe he is now Governor of the province of Cilicia.

The Arabs have a curious derivation of the word "Circassian." The first leader of this people was called *Kisa*, who was a professional thief. He fled by night from Caliph Umar, who wanted to kill him. When Umar asked where he was, they told him *Sara' kisa*, or "he fled by night"—hence *Circassian*! The word *Arnaüt*, or Albanian, has an equally ingenious derivation, and the same Caliph contributes to the story. The founder of this nationality was "wanted" by Umar, and so fled the country. When Umar wrote him to return, he replied, *'âr alaina an na'ûd*—"It would be a disgrace did I return"; hence the name, and God is All-knowing.

I will conclude this sketch with an interview with Isma'il Effendi, a Turkish officer of Nubian extraction. He had a favourable opinion of the Imam Yahya, who was out and away the strongest man in the Yemen, but inclined to be close-fisted, and so unpopular. After the armistice the Imam offered Isma'il the Kaimakamship of Ta'izz, but after twenty years of soldiering in the Yemen he wanted to get out of the country. He ascribed to insufficiency of troops the Turkish omission to attack Aden. He classed the Subehi tribesmen as dogs who understood force only; kindness shown to them was construed as weakness. Isma'il was full of praise of our British generosity, which was world-renowned. The Turkish surrender had been ordered from Stamboul, and he looked for fair and just treatment at our hands. Of

his leader, Ali Sa'id Pasha, he said he was the most honourable man in the Yemen, but his surrender to us "had let them all down"—*hua fallatatna kullana.* When I said the Pasha was a soldier, and had to obey his Government's orders, he forthwith agreed, but added that the order seemed incredible after four years of fighting without a defeat. This proves how well-equipped were the Turkish forces and how high their *morale.* It further proves how essential it was for us to have defeated the Turks in the field if we were to have regained our lost prestige in the Hinterland. On this point I was ever a *Vox et praeterea nihil.* What I had feared had come to pass; the Turks were removed from the Yemen by *diplomacy.*

Isma'il was of fine physique and soldierly in his bearing. He was popularly known as Isma'il al Aswad, the Black, and his name was a terror to evil-doers. He gloried in his rank of a Turkish Colonel. I introduced myself to him as Jacob "al Sâhir," the magician, and he at once stood erect and saluted me. We cut a comical figure, Isma'il and I, as we stood each with a cigarette in mouth, and in our right hands were lighted matches, which each was holding up to the other's cigarette end!

Discussing the importance of various Shâfa'i leaders in the Yemen, Isma'il gave the palm to Muhammad Hassân, of the Shâdhiliya sect. The rest, he said, had no following, and were at sixes and sevens.

## II

When Political Agent of the Hinterland I had much to do with the Turks on the border. The Turks have now gone, and the void is hard to fill. The Yemen will seem less picturesque, and be surely less interesting. Their joyous humour tempered the Arab's dignity and sedateness.

I will now introduce you to a dinner-party, where I entertained the Turks in my camp at Sanâh on the frontier. Sanâh is not Sana (popularly written Sana or Sanaa), the capital of the Yemen. We English are careless in our pronunciation of Arabic names. Both these places are commonly and wrongly pronounced as

*Sâhna.* In Arabic one must be careful of one's "s's." Let me give an instance. You say to a man "Shake hands with me," or *sâfihni* (the letter "sad"). If you unconcernedly use the letter "sin" the phrase is one I cannot put to paper! So the two "k's" in Arabic require careful discrimination. A missionary at a prayer-meeting asked the Lord to give those present a "clean dog" when he obviously meant a clean *heart*! Now to an Arab no dog is clean, and the request puzzled them acutely.

The Turkish forces in 1905 were marching up to Sana to effect its relief from the Zeidi forces who were beleaguering it. I asked the General Ghalib Pasha and his officers to dine with me. The General was marching from Kataba, over the way, the next morning, and was too busy to respond, but he deputed six of his officers and sent a letter excusing his attendance. These others came, and with them a guard of 200 Albanians. The hour for dinner was 6.30. The guests arrived just in time for the sunset prayer. I begged them to offer their orisons, and we would then discuss the viands. Badruddin (whose name suggests the full moon) was a blue-eyed and merry Staff Major, and the leader of the party. "I know," said he, "that the Prophet has ordained for us prayer, and prayer has its appointed time, but personally I prefer cognac." So he got his cognac forthwith, and one other followed his example, while the rest retired to pray. The Turks believe with Horace that the "jocose" Lyæan vintage dissipates the carking care of those wise enough to use such means. Religion is not a matter of food and drink. The accretions of a creed are often mentioned as if they comprised religion's very core and essence. The Prophet found Arabia addicted to strong liquor, and some drastic prohibition was necessary to stem the vice. He could not make Arabia "dry" by order, but a revelation from Allah was *de rigueur*, and even in Arabia to-day a minority drink spirituous liquors.

Just as in America to-day some stimulant is necessary to replace liquor, and such is readily found, so in Arabia they who forswear *Khamr*, or intoxicants, are fiends of the coffee-berry and of the pernicious *Kat*-leaf. I

have seen Arabs of the Tihama completely overpowered after the mastication of this bitter leaf. Some tribes on the littoral concoct an *apéritif* from the *dom* berry (Theban Palm). "Black Walt," in that much-discussed book written by a Court missionary during the war, mentions the drinking tendencies of Arabs on the coast, and those who impugn his veracity know not their Arabia. One of the Sheikhs of the B. Kuhra, who live near the sea, told me he used at one time to drink *Khamr*.

It is not we who have introduced strong drink into Arabia. Many Hijazis imbibe strong potions to-day. The old Karmathians believed in liquor, and said: "Liquor is but sky-water, to us allowed and sanctified by our religion." It is interesting to note that to-day in Yâfa'-al-Sifâl, which official Aden has wrongly labelled *Upper* Yâfa', we still find families bearing the cognomen of Al Karmati.

I know a Turk in high office in the Yemen who refused a drink I offered him. An Arab who heard him told me afterwards "He drinks largely to suit his taste, and afterwards takes a bath in it. He will call out 'Bring me water' or 'Bring me some what-d'you-call-it' (*jib li min hâdhâk*), and lo! liquor is served him."

If he does not drink liquor himself an Arab will give others to drink. During the Great War one of the members of the Sultan's House exiled in Aden deputed some Arabs to dope the Turks in Lahej with bottles of beer bought in Aden, so that they might divulge their secrets. In Dala in 1905 I was trying a man on the charge of murder. The accused was in detention in the Quarter Guard of a Madras Regiment. The case was going against the prisoner and startling revelations were expected, such, indeed, as would prove embarrassing to Amir Shaïf himself. So his Amirship sent a present of beer—it was Christmas—to the Christians on guard, who all imbibed freely. The prisoner escaped from their custody, manacled though he was, and, passing across the border, twelve miles distant, was never again heard of. Another high-born Arab, when the Turks came down to Lahej, found consolation in whisky. He took it, said an Arab to me, to get courage—*yatajallad bihi*.

The Caliph Al Walid bin Yazid had a tank of wine built, and in this he would fling himself and drink till the sides of the tank showed the diminution of the liquid. He was not the only one of the Caliphs who kept a wine-cellar.

One classical word for wine is *Kihwa*, and when coffee was introduced from Persia by Jamaluddin bin Muhammad al Dhubhani it was styled *Kahwa*, with an "a" for the "i." Before that the chief stimulant was the leaves of the *Kat* plant infused in water.

The Arab of the Yemen is not fanatical in the matter of liquor drunk by one of another creed. The saying goes, *Al Khamr mubâh 'indakum wa laisa 'indana*—"An intoxicant is lawful to you, but not to us!" and another phrase in currency is, *Kullu Khamrin muharram 'alaikum illa 'l 'akîk al yamâni*—"All liquor is forbidden you save the Yemeni cornelian." These stones abound at Dhamar. The expression is, however, believed to apply to the rosy lips of a maiden, and this is fair spoil to all men! The pre-Islamic poets were mighty quaffers of wine, and resented unseemly interference with their customs. It was Tarafa who sang:

> If you cannot stay my death, let me hasten the day with the means at my disposal.

A Moslem Zamindar of India told me he had not drunk wine for ten years, but before that time there was nothing he had not tasted. The priests, he said, were responsible for the introduction of many non-essential accretions, but the essence of Islam was contained in the Koran. The book is clear on the question. The believers in Paradise shall drink of wine, but from a "cup that shall engender no light discourse, no motive to sin."

To return to my dinner. It was short and merry. We drank champagne from mugs, and I found my friends full of good cheer and lively as crickets. When the time came for us to disperse "The Full Moon of the Faith," Badruddin, rushed from the tent into the open. The full moon was high in the heavens. "See, there I am," he exclaimed boisterously as he leapt unaided into his saddle, and his white pony flashed like a meteor into the

far distance, while the rest of the company followed him at a walk, all mounted on horses. The 200 Albanians brought up the rear. I asked a rifleman outside the tent how he, knowing only English, had understood these fellows. "Well, sir," he said, "you see, they spoke fairly decent Arabic!" Their resourceful entertainer had plied them with my brandy! The Apocrypha says, "Wine is as good as life to men, if they drink it in its measure." I trust it was so drunken; and I know the rifleman was a stern disciplinarian.

## III

A neighbouring Kaimakam would pay me frequent visits. He dined with me at night in the mess of the Rifle Brigade, and was exceedingly good company. The next day he suffered from a grievous headache and declined breakfast. By lunch-time he was better and ready to eat, and I took him to the Punjabi mess. His head still throbbed. The pipers piped their loudest behind his chair, as he was the guest of honour. Stuffing his fingers into his ears, he groaned audibly. I whispered to him that this conduct might give offence, when suddenly he remembered he had a job of work at his Headquarters and departed with all haste.

The Turks were equally good hosts. At their Custom House of Mawia, east of Ta'izz, I would visit them. On such state occasions the beverages consisted of excellent coffee and "soft" drinks of various hues.

The Turks loves ceremony. Get him, however, off duty, and he is a genial companion, and the soul of hospitality. Shakespeare talks of the "malignant and turban'd Turk." I have never seen one of the turbaned kind in the Yemen, and every one of my Turkish acquaintances was benign. I do not intend to convey the impression that the Turk drinks to excess. He does nothing of the kind. To everything there is a season.

There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it was from God

# CHAPTER ELEVEN

## MY MISSION TO THE COURT OF THE IMAM OF SANA

I ARRIVED in Hodeida on 18th August, 1919, to proceed to Sana, some 150 miles to the N.E. My object was to discuss with the Imam the future of the country after the Turkish surrender. There was no question of concluding a treaty with Imam Yahya, but we would learn his views. Before leaving Cairo I had recorded that the Shâfa'i and Isma'iliya sectaries in the Yemen would not sit down quietly under Zeidi rule unless (1) they recognised that H.M.'s Government would deal solely with the Imam ; and (2) they saw that the Imam was consolidating his rule in a conciliatory way.

The Imam, before my arrival in the country, had made a good start. The tribesmen between Al Hujeila and the sea, and notably the most powerful tribe of the Bani Kuhra, had already conducted *pourparlers* with the Imam, and most of the conditions imposed by the latter had been accepted by them. The question of the free passage of Zeidi troops through the country leading to the sea was the main stumbling-block to Zeidi overlordship. The Imam had been successful in securing the presence of his Governor at Bâjil, a Turkish post thirty-five miles inland from Hodeida. This official was Abu Hadi, the Head Sheikh of the B. Kuhra. It has ever been the Imam's practice to appoint Shâfa'i Governors in Shâfa'i tracts, so as to avoid wounding the religious susceptibilities of this sect.

My arrival in Bâjil was premature, as had been predicted in Cairo, but the objection was overruled. It was surely impolitic to pass into the country before our mandate was affirmed. The Imam of Sana had promised to escort me up from Hodeida, and had welcomed the coming journey of the mission to his capital. The ambition of his House since 1840 was about to be realised.

HODEIDA, THE CHIEF ARABIAN PORT IN THE RED SEA.

ZEIDI HORSEMEN SENT BY THE IMAM TO ESCORT ME TO SANA.

The mission was composed of myself as envoy of H.M. the King, two medical officers of the R.A.M.C., a Political Assistant, Major R——, from Aden, together with my Indian Secretary, Captain N——, and a member of the Pan-Arab Party from Cairo.

Full assurances were given me at Hodeida, and the two most prominent Sheikhs of the B. Kuhra arrived there to escort my party. One of these was the Imam's own Governor of Bâjil, Sheikh Abu Hadi. I brought twenty-five men of the Aden Troop, under a Risaldar Major. These were intended to protect the mules and the treasure which I carried, but for the safety of the mission I depended on the Arab escort promised by the Imam. This escort, however, had halted at Bâjil. It consisted of thirteen Zeidi horsemen and 100 foot soldiers. The Imam's Agent, too, had come to Bâjil to welcome me.

My premature arrival had disconcerted the Imam, who was in train, as I have said, of propitiating this Shâfa'i tract, and my arrival cut short the *pourparlers*. Having engaged to welcome me, the Imam had to make the best arrangement then possible. Had he failed to send his deputies, his shortcomings as the prospective ruler of this tract were openly paraded before us.

I recommended this route in order to gauge the Imam's influence. It was easy to have gone up from Aden. The *personnel* of the chiefs along this latter route and the route itself were well known. The Bâjil route was less known, and the B. Kuhra were a wild lot who had often given trouble to the Turks. They supplied escorts and camels for Turkish military stores. The tribes in this quarter are strongly pro-Turk, and the B. Kuhra particularly are fanatical Moslems.

It was the first time since 1872 and the re-establishment of the Turks that Europeans were essaying to go up to Sana under a purely Arab régime. Hitherto the Turks had supplied the armed escorts. I was anxious to discover the exact attitude of the tribesmen, both to the Imam and to the British Government. Both these objects were secured, thanks to my detention for four months at Bâjil. A Foreign Office subordinate caused me no

little amusement when he said that his chief had reckoned me an expert, until my capture by the Arabs had broken his faith in me! The crop of experts the war has produced is legion; they were the offspring of the creative imagination of their employers in high office, and their passing is meteoric. Few are those who can say *Non omnis moriar!*

Bacon says that most arts are judged by acts and not by successes and events. He instances the lawyer who is judged by virtue of his pleading, and not by the issue of the cause; the shipmaster by directing his course aright, and not by the fortune of the voyage; but the physician, and perhaps the *politique*, is judged most by the event, for who can tell if a patient die or recover, or if a State be preserved or ruined, whether it be by art or accident?

My policy during detention in Bâjil was not so much to effect a speedy release as to study the people, and haply stave off the stealthy encroachment of the Idrisi Saiyid who, with the removal of the Turkish forces, was trying to filch as much of the country as he could. The Idrisi was glad of an excuse to move southwards in spite of the promise he had given us not to pass beyond Zeidiya. Zeidiya lies in the B. Suleil country to the east of the island of Kamaran, and on that same meridian of longitude. It is the new site of Bait al Fakih *al Kabir*, called so to distinguish it from the better known and historical Bait al Fakih further south.

It has been said that the troopers I took with me were too few in number, and this fact would invite attack. I remembered the words of the Greek Phocion to the Senate who had deputed him to the islands to demand contributions, and had offered him a fleet of twenty sail: "If you send me against enemies, such a fleet is too small; if to friends, one ship is sufficient." It is better to disarm suspicion by assuming you are dealing with friends. I was advised to demand hostages before leaving Hodeida, but this I never have done, although it is the usual Arab practice. The high priest in Aden of the Isma'iliyans had given me introductions to the Head

Sheikhs of that community, through whose borders I should have to pass at J. Harâz, and this kindly old gentleman had recommended me and my party to clip our moustaches, after the usage of this sect. It was a kindly suggestion, but I always have passed everywhere for what I am. I am no advocate of the adage, "Out of my country and myself I go."

The B. Kuhra tribesmen before I arrived at Hodeida had given a written bond to the Imam's Agent at Bâjil engaging to pass my mission along in safety to Al Hujeila, where the Zeidi influence begins. This bond they had broken. It is most unusual for Arabs to write a bond; their spoken word is sufficient. The practice of such bonds must be due to the familiarity of the Arabs in this part with Turkish usage. Sheikh Abu Hâdi, the Governor of Bâjil, was not a signatory to this Kuhra undertaking. He abstained because of his position as Governor. He despised his fellow Sheikhs, and would style them to me as dogs. Abu Hâdi is one of the cleanest gentlemen I have met in my political experience. He and his old father Ali Humeida have ever championed the cause of England. His House was, as far back as 1840, in close alliance with the Imam of Sana, in their opposition to the Sherifs of Abu 'Arîsh, of whom I have written in chapter iii. Abu Hâdi's forebear was at that date the recipient of guns from the Government of Aden, and he showed me these ordinances in the old fort of Bâjil, and pointed at the hill in the near vicinity—J. Sherif—so called from the fierce attacks that were unsuccessfully launched from that point against his family stronghold of Bâjil.

My mission arrived at Bâjil on the 20th August. The heat was intense. The Turks told us that had our party arrived a month earlier we should have succumbed to the heat, and no Turk would stay there, but trekked eastwards to the hills. On our arrival in Bâjil at 8 p.m. we were comfortably housed in the Turkish Headquarters, and introduced to the leading citizens and to the Imam's representatives. The next day attempts were made by Saiyid Abdul Kâdir of Al Marâwa'a, who had come to

Bâjil some time before, to collect the Kuhra Sheikhs who were responsible for the onward journey, but these began to make excuses for their absence. This Head and influential Saiyid is held in the highest veneration by the local tribesmen. His veriest hint is law. He now waxed wrath over the excuses made, and sent strips cut from his turban to the Sheikh's villages to secure their attendance.

A week after our arrival the three Sheikhs assembled and were joined by Abu Hâdi. I met them in a room on the roof-top of the house where we were quartered. Abu Hâdi sat on one side, and his expression was cynical. His eyes gleamed his contempt for the coarse verbiage employed by the three worthies. They asked why I had come, and where were the missions of the Allied Powers? One more vehement than his fellows declared I was a traitor, who had come to hand over the country to the Imam. "By Allah! who *is* the Imam?" he cried. "We Kuhra are tribesmen. Allah has endowed us liberally with arms. We have ample flocks; our crops are more than sufficient; our homes are secure; we get our *Kat* regularly from J. Reïma. We want nothing more. You English are no fighters. You hire strangers to fight your battles." Here he stopped and shot forth the snorting ejaculation *Boh!* This word *Boh* was a favourite exclamation in the mouths of these Sheikhs. It is very expressive, and is belched forth cyclonically, and its meanings are various to suit the context. To explain it and the look in the face of the utterer of this monosyllabic compendium one must have recourse to some such periphrasis as this: "Go to h——, you infidel, for I don't care a d—— for you or your originators, and if you have anything to reply, which is unlikely, say it and be d——d to you." It is a horrible word, but Arabic is a very concise language, and a little goes a long way. All Eastern languages beat the Western for terseness of expression. We know the story of the General who, after the inspection of an Indian Cavalry Regiment, made long and critical comments on the manœuvres he had witnessed, and then, turning to the Colonel, he asked him to translate

THE SHEIKHS OF B. KUHRA
after the interview at which they decided on our detention.

AT THE FOUNTAIN, BÂJIL. MAHMUD NADIM BEY, EX-WALI OF THE YEMEN, SEATED WITH THE IMAM'S ENVOY, AL 'ARASHI.

his remarks to the men. The Colonel opened his parable and said: "*General Sahib bahut khush hai* (The General is well pleased) *; tambu ko jao, Suar Log!*" (to your tents, O tribe of porkers!). The word *suar* is a pig, but does office with some of our linguists for the somewhat similarly sounding word *sowar*, or trooper. The General (*loquitur*): "A remarkably concise language, sir, this Hindustani!" The *sowars* felt not a whit aggrieved. They knew the difficulties which the language presented to their Colonel Sahib!

I have said that Arabic is concise. A critic has said of it that the language contains words, every one of which has both a positive and a negative meaning, and also comprises some reference to the camel, its organs and idiosyncrasies, or its motions either standing or recumbent. The Arabs term a windy orator "the faucal bag of a rutting camel" (*Shikshika*). This bag had gurgled and was temporarily still, and all eyes were directed towards me, the *Mandûb*, or envoy. I looked at the speaker, but uttered not a word. Alexandre Dumas, giving advice to a traveller in the East, says he should remain a mystery, and the more he plays this part the more is he respected! "Speak," roared Yahya Ali the babbler. "Have I not power to imprison you and to seize your arms? Yea, give these up to me at once." I ignored the reference, but explained my mission, which was to learn the views—their own included—of the various sects and creeds. I was an envoy to the Imam certainly, and intended to proceed, *Insha Allah!* "Give up your arms; you are our prisoners!" "God has brought you into the net," added another, Al Baghawi; and I recalled the Psalmist's "Thou broughtest us into the net." This Sheikh then quoted the Arabic proverb: "The entrance of a man into the net is quite simple, but careful consideration must precede his exit therefrom," and yet another followed glibly: *Râs al kabsh wa la gharârat al jarâd*, or, "Better to catch hold of the sheep in front of you than to strive to attain to a bale of locusts." "Time passes," bellowed Yahya Ali. "Tell me, O envoy (this satirically), are you going to hand over to us?" At this point the

friendly Abu Hâdi gave me an expressive wink, and muttered *sotto voce* that he would take over our possessions in his office as Governor of Bâjil. Yahya then took an opposite tack; he was perhaps figuring the wrath of the Imam, and said pleadingly, "Mandûb, become *our* Mandûb! You are no prisoners. You have the freedom of Bâjil; make yourselves at home here. None will harm you. Our liege-lord is the Imam, but yourself are a disturber of the country and a foe to Islam." I then broke the silence and quoted the proverb which expresses that the game is up—"The she ass (that carries you) is dead, and the pilgrimage is over"—*mâtat al himâra, inkat'at al ziâra.* The Sheikhs gave a loud guffaw, and Muhammad Zeid said: "That's good; your ass (meaning themselves) has indeed collapsed, and so you must all stay here." The party then rose and walked out on the open terrace where, wreathed in smiles, they were snapshotted by one of our party.

My ninety-nine mules were tethered hard by in charge of my own men. Abu Hâdi had my treasure-boxes removed by slaves to his residence. Our arms were deposited in a room downstairs, and the key that turned the lock was Abu Hâdi's. "See, they are there," he said, "and yours whenever wanted. I will do everything I can for you. My guards alone will keep watch over you. I like you English. Would I could go to England with you! Remember I am at your service." Our boxes were then searched. My own kit and Major R——'s, who shared my room, were not opened. I had in one of the boxes a Koran, my constant companion, and I told them so. Now it is sacrilege in your pilfering to find a Koran in the loot. A Sheikh of my acquaintance once rifled a caravan, and the goods were hastily removed to his village. There examined, he found a Koran. This changed his whole career, and the once noted brigand became a pious reader and a glib quoter of Koranic precepts. It is also possible that I was saved from the insult by the friendly feelings towards me of Sheikh Abu Hâdi. The inquisitive Sheikhs were in quest of a sum of £140,000 which rumour from Aden had bruited that I

carried for the coffers of Imam Yahya. They were insistent on this point, and I encouraged their careful search!

Thus started our "captivity." We were free to roam in the vicinity of Bâjil. Abu Hâdi's guards were ever in our rear. They were jovial men, and full of jests and good humour. Jock, one of my doctors, was a fine, all-round athlete and a sprinter. Noting his agility, one of the guards matched him against one who had boasted of his own prowess. So they ran a race, these two, of 200 yards to a tree before them. As he ran Jock lost a shoe, but defeat was unthinkable, and the Scot came in a winner by some yards. The watchers on the house-tops cried out, "Look, he that tends the mules has fled, but the other is after him. Allah give him success!" Jock, though a doctor, was also my transport officer. He wound the gramophone, too, and was called "the father of the box." He was an excellent barber, and we bowed our heads to him periodically. His sole tool was a clipper, and he plied it with dexterity.

My doctors were invaluable. There is no greater asset. Captain B—— was the other. He is tall and of a pleasing and ruddy countenance, ever smiling, never wearied, working by night and by day, both in the dispensary he had rigged up on the ground floor and in the village. He was called up at any hour—sometimes to excise a bullet, for the blood-feud is rife; to give quinine; to hold consultation over a sick man in a room crowded with relations, all of whom gave him advice *gratis*. B——'s practice was immense, and he learnt much. One patient he left at 6 a.m., after a lengthy all-night diagnosis, standing in a barrel of hot water. I forget the complaint. His joviality and his presence earned him the *sobriquet* of "the-son-of-the-sister-of-the-King." His person was sacrosanct. When once, on entering a house, a fanatic, standing within, spat on the ground and used words of insult, the others were awed by his daring. "His Government care not a jot for Jacob," said one Sheikh—and he spoke with clairvoyancy—"but let us deal gently with 'the-son-of-the-sister-of-the-King.'" "Come and stay

with us," said another, " and we will give thee a daughter from amongst us to wed; leave us not," and he cast his two sinuous arms about B——'s neck. This was Al Baghawi, and we called him for short " Bug." My Pan-Arab was Al Mughaira, and him we styled " Mug."

The Imam wrote letters of remonstrance, and despatched daily telegrams to the Kuhra Sheikhs and to the Saiyid. He threatened them with annihilation if the mission were not forwarded at once to destination. He stigmatised their action as an outrage, and such as would bring a lasting reproach on Islam.

I wrote to the Imam to desist from an armed rescue, for bloodshed must follow, and his rival, the Idrisi, would seize the occasion to come in and take over the district. He wrote and thanked me for my friendly advice. The telegraph operator was a Turk we dubbed " Freddy," who in return for occasional gifts of dollars, a few cigarettes, and a bottle, now and again, of brandy, stealthily placed in his office by my trusty Arab boy Ahmed, gave me the full context of every message to and from Sana sent by the Sheikhs, the Saiyid, and the Imam himself. I was thus *au fait* with all that went on. I had spies, too, in the Saiyid's house next door, where nightly conferences were wont to be held. In the daytime the Sheikhs, Saiyids, and all the village chewed the bitter *Kat* leaf, and great was the depression when the *Kat* caravans, as occasionally happened, failed to bring in this much-prized commodity.

Conferences with the Sheikhs were of daily occurrence, and they started at 11 a.m. Much was said and repeated, and the refrain was ever the same : " You must stay here till Allah opens up the way for your return." Our post to and from the coast was regular. The picture-papers received from England were much perused, and comments were freely passed. Pointing to a picture of the Dutch Consul in the *Sphere*, one said to me, " Why, that is you ! " The photo of the Prince of Wales, which one of my party had nailed to the wall of his room, called forth a hundred inquisitive questions. Our camp-kit was a never-failing source of interest. They would take down and fix up

the X-pattern beds and washstands. The cutting open of a tin of Wills's "Navy Cut" elicited expressions of surprise at the ingenuity of the infidel contrivance; the huge bath-sponge was an enigma, and was squeezed, as never before, by their indigo-dyed fingers; my travelling looking-glass pandered to a vanity that would redden the cheeks of any Western girl; and the reverse side, which was a magnifier, threw them into consternation. Surely on this side dwelt Iblis! (the Devil). At times "Bug" would measure his length on a camp-bed. They were a familiar folk, and privacy we had none. The gramophone they at first affected to despise. It was a device of the Evil One. However, when we turned on an Arabic tune to the strident accompaniment of some courtesan songstress of Egypt, the dour Sheikhs were enraptured, and quickly themselves learnt the technique, and would call in to put on a record. The services of the "father of the box" were soon dispensed with. He was an admirable caricaturist, and as the Sheikhs argued with me, about it and about, Jock from his seat in the corner would put to paper his impressions. There was little our Jock could not do.

Seeing the pictures of aeroplanes in our papers, the Sheikhs' curiosity was aroused. They had heard of these devices, but never had glimpsed one. I would chaffingly tell them we had a few in our kit and these they had failed to find. So another search was made. Yahya Ali came up one evening when our beds were aligned on the terrace, and the mosquito-nets, used to defeat the morning flies, aroused his keen curiosity. He asked what these were. I told him he had at last found the aeroplanes; the sails were set, and before morning we should fly away! He uttered not a word, but slunk stealthily away, casting a last look Lot's-wife-wise ere he descended the corkscrew staircase. He was a trifle scared, but had a glimmering of a "leg-pull" and felt abashed.

When I wrestled with Sheikh "Bug"—and his octopus-like arms were his strong point—I would at length put him on the mat and then sit on his prostrate form. Yahya

Ali enjoyed the fun, and shouted " Yâ Mandûb, Wallâhi ! thou art a *fuheil.*" To be called a young stallion was a compliment ! Our games of chess were anathema, till one day my Indian secretary sat playing the black pieces and the Major the white. The former was winning, and Yahya Ali was a spectator, grunting his disapproval. He asked for an explanation, and when told of the Major's defeat said, " It is good the Moslem Queen hath overcome the infidel King ! " Games of chance are an abomination to the Moslem, and chess is considered as such. Any game that allures one from prayer is gainsaid.

The ex-Wali of the Yemen, Mahmûd Nâdim Bey, was at last deputed by the Imam to come down from Sana and parley for our release. The Bey had issued much and objectionable propaganda during the war. Now shorn of his power, he was employed by the Imam, who during the Turkish régime had found his services invaluable. M.N., to give him his initials, was subjected to gross insults at the hands of the Kuhra Sheikhs. His position was very difficult. He stayed in Bâjil for over two months. He had offered Abu Hâdi £T4,000 to compass our release, but Abu Hâdi was not the sole arbiter of our destiny, and I refused to be smuggled away, leaving my party behind. M.N.'s longstay at Bâjil irritated the Imam, who fancied his emissary was playing a double game. The Kuhra, on the other hand, distrusted him as an Imamic emissary. The Bey would dine with us on the roof-top, and was very good company, as was his smart little Turkish A.D.C. M.N. has been maligned in many quarters as an arch-intriguer. He was certainly pro-Turk, and that is to his credit. He worked zealously for our release. Other Turkish officers came to Bâjil, and all were helpful. They might have been quite otherwise, seeing we had entered Turkish territory before the conclusion of a treaty ; and our direct deal with the Imam was regardless of their presence in the province. The majority of the soldiers had gone, but the civil Government had not thereby ceased to function.

At our daily " powwows " M.N. was ever present. The Kuhra had arranged it so, and I readily assented. On

ABU HADI,
the Imam's Governor at Bájil.

ALI HUMEIDA,
the father of Abu Hadi.

YAHYA ALI,
one of the Kuhra Sheikhs.

ALI SALAMI,
the Imam's Agent at Bájil.

these occasions I would help to pass round cigarettes, and this annoyed the worthy Turk. " It is *infra dig.* Hazrat al Mandûb, yourself to get up and serve these Arab dogs. Wallâhi ! if I were in power I should tie them up and chastise them as of yore " ; and he instanced how he had once treated the turbulent Yahya, who now treated the Bey with scant courtesy.

The Friday procession to the mosque, hard by, was a spectacle of great interest to us from our top windows. There was the stately procession of the Bey as he stalked to prayer with his following of Zeidi warriors ; the large umbrella-canopy held over his head ; the largesse he and his A.D.C. scattered to importunate beggars who thronged his path ; the rival approach of the Saiyid Abdul Kâdir ; the crowds who impeded his passage, as he stopped to give a blessing and the tribesmen stooped to kiss his knees ; the merchant-class who waited till the *muezzin* had well-nigh finished his call. Some of these, less tinged with " religiosity," would arrive in hot haste but a moment before the worshippers debouched. It was enough that they had entered the sacred precincts, however late the entry. My secretary, whom we called " George," was a devout Moslem, and would attend regularly these services, and from him we learnt much of the inner mind of our captors.

There was a young and fanatical Saiyid who addressed the worshippers on several occasions, and advocated the Jihad against the infidels lodging in the large house. I remonstrated with Abu Hâdi on his folly, but the Sheikh replied there was no cause for uneasiness ; were not his own guards in charge of us ? The other Sheikhs, however, grew uneasy. This hot-head might incite the people, and the Sheikhs, as our captors, would be held responsible to our Government. These Sheikhs had a bad conscience. Again, their detention of the mission was daily increasing the Imam's ire. If they released us, they believed a punitive expedition would be sent up to Bâjil. In any case, then, vengeance was inevitable, and the Sheikhs were paralysed into inaction. The young Saiyid must be gagged. One Friday, after the service, he was dragged

to a position in full sight of our quarters, and there thrashed by Yahya Ali and turned into the jail that lay between us and the mosque. Here he suffered a few hours of disgrace and was then released. He never preached again!

The Political Officer who had come to Hodeida to effect our release spent much money in his attempts to win over the neighbouring Sheikhs to the British cause. The policy, by sequestering the Kuhra's neighbours, was intended to isolate our captors. This programme, though well meant, was doomed to miscarry. A party of these pro-British Sheikhs, mounted on Government mules, came over to Bâjil to press our release. They prated of largesse received. The Kuhra received them in conference and heard their case. Yahya Ali, the Kuhra spokesmen, and Muhammad Zeid, his fellow Sheikh, then firmly replied: "It is we Kuhra who have captured the mission, and at the moment decreed by Allah we shall free them. We care not how much money the British Government have given you." A large sum, £50,000, was offered as a ransom by the Government. I told the Sheikhs they would now be rich men. They became angry, and refused to answer the letter. They shook their hands from holding the bribe, saying, "We want none of your filthy lucre." Imagine Mexican banditti refusing good gold! I do not blame the Kuhra for our capture. They believed I was going up to sign away the country to the Imam. The *tertius gaudens* in the case, if not the *agent provocateur*, was my friend the Idrisi Saiyid of Sabia. His agent in Bâjil was one of these Kuhra Sheikhs. He journeyed over to Idrisi soil, and made no efforts to conceal his proclivities. Sheikh Ahmed Khuz'an would advise me to write to the Idrisi, who, he said, had power to release the mission, but I steadily declined to do so. If the Idrisi were called in, he would naturally expect a *quid pro quo*, and I knew how he coveted Hodeida, and the prospective perquisites of the Imam of Sana. I am convinced the Idrisi had counselled the Saiyid Abdul Kâdir to detain the mission, and the Saiyid himself feared the advent of the Imam to a locality where

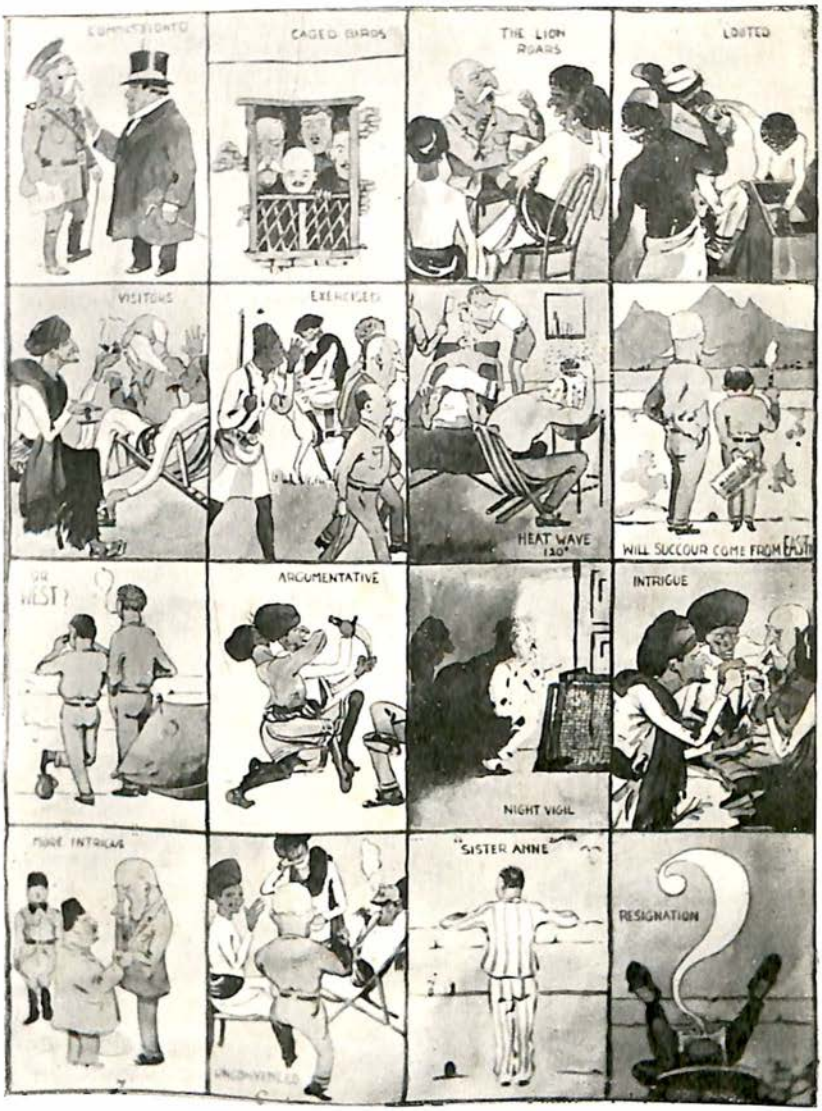
his own influence had been long paramount. A Nemesis has followed his coquetry with the Idrisi ruler, and to-day the good man bitterly regrets his action, and has become hostile to the Idrisi presence at Hodeida, by which a blow has been struck at Free Trade.

Urged from without, and in opposition to the policy I had come to further, the Idrisi was called in to extricate us. He deputed the Mansab of Al Munîra to Bâjil. This worthy was candid, and counselled me to grant no concessions to the Kuhra, who, if they complied with the Idrisi's wishes and let the mission go, would be amply satisfied with his master's protection. The Kuhra, however, would have none of the Idrisi, and I, too, declined the Mansab's mediation. I obtained later the original letter written by the Idrisi to the Saiyid Abdul Kâdir. The addressee was adjured by God and the Prophet forthwith to release the mission intact, and to conduct us *to the coast*! "Listen," said the writer, "to my advice, which is for the good and maintenance of the Moslem country; be not afraid of anything, because my armies, which are concentrating in the country of the B. Jorâbiha, will after occupying J. Milhân proceed to Beit al Fakih, and a part of them will come to Bâjil. Do not listen to any intriguers, *and do not believe those who say I have worldly interests behind all this*" (truly Arab subterfuge, and not meant for sauceless consumption). "Nothing remains after my advice but *red fire* and useless regrets. The Mansab of Al Munîra has already advised you what to do. Time presses, and the delay of the mission is harmful." Now comes a delicious tit-bit. "Know that in reality Jacob and his staff are of no importance to England." This is Tennyson's distinction between the single life and the type. Saiyid Muhammad had not read the poet, but truth is one and is not dependent on any one channel of communication. "In fact," continued the writer, "the Government would like their captivity to be prolonged, to make an excuse for breaking their engagements with the Arabs, on the ground that the latter have broken their promises by capturing the mission; and so they will advance on your place, and

thence to Sana, and will take possession of it, as they have of Constantinople, Baghdad, Irak, Damascus, and Jerusalem. They will then rule you as they desire. The tribes in your place are ignorant folk, and they in Bâjil who pretend to be politicians (a hit at the Turkish Bey), and to manage the correspondence, are unacquainted with the politics of these days. . . . May Allah guide everyone into the right path." This path was through the strait gate leading to Idrisi aggrandisement! The tribesmen were simple folk, but not so foolish as the Idrisi imagined. The night before my mission was released by an agreement made with the Saiyids and the Sheikhs, namely on the 11th December, a large concourse of Sheikhs and Akils, with M.N., assembled on the house-top, and, referring to the close proximity of the Idrisi troops, asked if I were actually plotting for the Idrisi's entrance into Bâjil. It took over an hour for the Bey and myself to assure them to the contrary. I had just written to the Idrisi's generalissimo to keep away from an area to which the Idrisi had no rightful claim. Thereupon Sheikhs Yahya Ali and "Bug" gave the signal to break up, and said, "O envoy, we rely implicitly on your promise to keep the Idrisi away from our country." Without this assurance the Sheikhs would have remained obdurate, and our release never have been effected, except by force.

The agreement I made was worded in original by the Political Officer in Hodeida. It was too abstract in form, and the Sheikhs would not agree to any signature but my own. Arabs will become attached to the man in their midst. They follow not the voice of a stranger.

On the arrival of the Political Officer I had styled myself *mufaddam*, or a "muzzled" camel, but the Sheikhs declined to accept any other's mediation. I therefore translated the agreement into the concrete, and so we came away to Hodeida escorted by 2,000 warriors, many of whom came into Hodeida and bade us farewell. Drums were beaten, and a "phantasia" of horsemen, camelmen, and donkey-riders beguiled the tedium of the march to the sea.




SIXTEEN STUDIES IN CARICATURE OF THE MISSION'S DETENTION IN BÂJIL. By D. T. R.

I have eliminated as much of the political situation as is possible, recording only so much as will make the narrative intelligible. My full official report was sent to my chief at Cairo, Viscount Allenby. I am more concerned in this chapter to discover the tribal idiosyncrasies.

The Sheikhs, notably Yahya Ali, were surprised to know I read their Book. I never travel in Arabia without the Koran. My Bâjil copy was closely scrutinised, and questions asked of the pencil-notes in the margins.

At one powwow, attended by a *posse* of other tribal Sheikhs—for the whole country-side would visit me and pass comments—Yahya Ali raged like the Bull of Bashan. He declared I was insulting him and all Moslems present, but none of us could detect my crime. I rose and went over to reason with him, but in vain. Then, resuming my seat, I adopted my former posture, with one leg crossed over the other and raised from the floor. The wily "Bug" had a brain-wave, and, coming to my chair, tapped the offending left leg. I put it down next the other, and the faucal bag of the rutting camel was instantly withdrawn, and swallowed! It is unusual for the Arab to sit on a chair. He prefers the ground, and his shoes are left without. If he adopt our practice and sit as we sit, the Arab will keep on his shoes, but these must not be raised from the floor. The shoe has a sinister connection; compare the Psalmist's "Over Edom will I cast my shoe." The floor, even in a Christian assembly, is a possible place of prayer, where the forehead of the believer is bent in prostration. The raised shoe suggested the forehead below it—an impossible combination truly, the Christian shoe and the Moslem forehead! The idea was repulsive, and no wonder the Sheikh raged!

On another occasion we had a spirited debate on the question of our infidelity. Bug would often twit me with being a *Kafir*, and the impeachment I would instantly refute. It was time to bring the matter to a climax. M.N. I placed in the chair, and round him were Sheikhs and Saiyids and merchants of Bâjil. I sat on a camp-bed opposite, and near me was my Moslem secretary. All

had our Korans. The chairman opened the debate by reading Koran v. 82; "Verily believers, Jews and Christians and Sabians, who believe in God and the Last Day, and act rightly, have their meed with their Lord." Another who was friendly to us—and I think it was one of the Turkish Mutasarrifs—quoted v. 62: "O believers, take not as your friends those who received the scriptures before you, who scoff at your religion and *the infidel's*." He explained that this might be a hit at the Christians, but he personally thought that it included such only of them who derided Islam, and this he stoutly denied that we of Bâjil had ever done. He stated that the *infidels* (the *Kafirs*) were here clearly excluded from the category of Christians, and must be a sect other than they. He was followed by a couple of the Sheikhs who argued the pro-*Kafir* view, but were interrupted by a Saiyid, who read the 9th Sura, where God hath said: "The Arabs of the desert are the strongest in *Kufr*, or infidelity, and in hypocrisy." This, of course, proved nothing. The chairman reminded the audience that I read the sacred Book, and God leadeth to truth whom He will. The Bey looked towards me, as much as to say: "Your case is safe in my hands." I quoted the familiar passage of Sura v: "You will find the strongest enemies to believers in the persons of the Jews and the *polytheists*"—surely another and ancillary proof of our acceptance with Allah, who Himself had excused Christians from the style of *Mushrikin*, or "syntheists"—"and you will find the believers' closest friends they who say they are Christians." I supported M.N.'s statement that none who read the Book could fairly be called *Kafir*; then, digressing, I reminded them that mosques existed in Christian England and many Englishmen had become Moslem. This fact staggered Yahya. "What! Mosques in England! Boh! Boh!" He apparently discredited me. It was Abu Hâdi's turn, and he scored a success by ignoring the Book and citing instead the daily life of the Christians before them. "Look you, Mashâïkh! for ye be all men of reason... Ye know Major R—— of this party. His Arab servant is grievous ill

of a fever. When on my rounds this morning I visited his room I saw him tossing on his bed, for Allah decreeth what seemeth Him best. He is the Subtle One and All-knowing." Here Yahya ejaculated, "Said I not it was a disgrace for a Moslem to serve a Christian? Verily hath Allah afflicted this youth with punishment well merited!" Abu Hâdi looked at the speaker, but deigned no comment. "The Major had fixed up his own mosquito-nets, since the flies, Allah curse them! abound, and was laving the lad's limbs with his own sponge full of water. Call ye such an one infidel? Would any of *ye* have so cared for your servant?" This settled the case for the majority of them. "Bug" had not opened his mouth. He was an apt quoter of the Koran and of poetical fragments, but it was he who had initiated the charge, and he was sure of his ground; what need to adduce evidence? "*Al yôm*," he cried, "the day is far spent; let us arise and be going." "And store away your *Kat*!" I added. A *mukhazzin* is a storer (of *Kat* understood). "Bug's" look conveyed his appreciation of my accurate gauge of his meaning and the reason of his hasty withdrawal. "Well, Mandûb," said he, "you may not be a *Kafir*, but——" He did not finish the sentence. So far as he was concerned, the debate had left him cold and unconvinced. At any rate he abandoned the epithet, and it was ever afterwards "Yâ *hadrat* al Mandûb"—Your Honour the Envoy! The debate had cleared the air. A spirit of *camaraderie* sprang up. Before I left Bâjil the Sheikhs said they had hated me on arrival, but we were now friends, and if ever I returned this way, the country was open to me wherever I wished to roam. Patience, or the policy of attrition, alone will score in Arabia. "We convinced by our presence." I look back on our enforced stay with a wistful longing to return. Life is correspondence with environment.

The late Sir Swinton Jacob told me an amusing story of the early days in Aden. He was with a party at Lahej, and gave the Sultan some ice, which he much appreciated, and asked how it was made. It was explained that fire had some part in its formation. One of the

Arabs standing by at once remarked that it was useless to send the *Kafirs* to Jahannam, for by their sorcery they would convert the flames into solid water.

The weather in August was distressingly hot, but it was followed by tropical storms of rain daily, accompanied by thunder and lightning. The rooms were full of rushing water. Scantily clothed, we improvised aquatic sports on the open terrace. The fruit was of varied kinds—melons, peaches, figs, purple and white grapes, and excellent mealy potatoes. The Bey provided me with the latter in exchange for a supply of cheroots, or, as he termed them, *dolma*. He would sit nightly at the fountain below our house, and there all the Sheikhs would assemble. I went down with my box of *dolma* and the Bey provided endless cups of coffee. He did not care for our preparation, though he was too polite to *say* so, but when he paid me his morning calls his coffee-man accompanied him. The Turk understands how to brew coffee.

Often during our stay we missioners would picture the meal each would call for on regaining his liberty. Various and toothsome were the dishes we named. My choice was just fresh salmon, a bird perhaps, and a peach Melba.

On arrival in London on a late Sunday afternoon, I drove straight to Jules of Jermyn Street. I asked the *maître* what he would suggest, and his menu was ever good. He took up the card and said: "If I were you, I'd have salmon, then a bit of this bird, and, if you take sweets, here's a peach Melba I think you'll relish."

And yet some do contemn clairvoyancy!

The Zeidi Guard were fine, cheery fellows. After the Bey's return from the Mosque these men would form up in two rows facing each other and chant their Zeidi songs. This was repeated every evening at sunset. The refrain was very impressive, and haunted one long after the chant was finished. These men are of excellent symmetry and of more graceful build than the Shâfa'i tribesmen. I could readily understand the Koranic dictum, "Verily we have created man of the most excellent symmetry." There were a few warriors, too, from the B. Yâm tribe

MAHMUD NADIM BEY,
the ex-Governor-General of the Yemen, caricatured as our jailor of Bâjil (by D. T. R.)

GROUP TAKEN AT BÂJIL.
Seated, from left to right: The Author, Mahmud Nadim, and his Turkish A.D.C. Standing: Major Reilly, Capt. Richardson, Capt. Brock.

from Nejrân—pleasant folk, with a keen sense of humour and full of the joy of life. To a query of mine, one of these replied, "Dost know of our River Khârid? By Allah! we shall welcome thee there."

The versatile Jock introduced the game of football to Bâjil, and almost every evening a game was played with the troopers of my escort and the muleteers. The whole town would line up and cheer the players. The Sheikhs forgot their Sheikhliness and the Saiyids their devotion. The crowd were especially jubilant if a player were bowled over in the sand; and if the ball were kicked forcibly into their midst, as they pressed on the line, they were wild with delight. Nothing so frivolous had ever been seen in Bâjil. The little A.D.C. was an occasional player, and the roughness of the game delighted him. He would play in top-boots, and return to our mess covered with dust and grime, but ready for his brandy-and-soda. Sports, too, were introduced, and the youths of the place were our ardent imitators. Jock and "the-son-of-the-King's-sister" in this way greatly contributed to the popularity of the mission, and the Risaldar-Major Malikdad Khan and Dafedar Muhammad Shah, by their entertainments in their lines, won a deserved place in the affections of the townsmen.

Aden imagined we were closely-guarded prisoners, and unable to appraise the situation. How little Aden knew! Had they seen us at play, or been at our political gatherings, they would have realised we were lively actors in the comedy that was being played in Bâjil, and that all schemes outside Bâjil were pure guesswork and valueless, because outside the ken of our captors. Had my suggestion been adopted by Government, no political assistance at Hodeida was called for. It was all a waste of time and money, as was fully proved by the final act of the play. The man on the spot is the one to conduct operations. Ultimately, I was forced to take affairs into my own hands. No car will run smoothly if two pairs of hands are clutching the wheel!

The curse of the Yemen is the excessive use of the *Kat* leaf. The plant was introduced from Abyssinia. The

literature of *Kat* is extensive, but is rather a study of folk-lore, and will be treated elsewhere. The word is derived from a root meaning "sustenance." It takes the place with Arabs of intoxicants. It has a twofold effect on the "storer." It is a stimulant with some, and with others, but less often, a sedative. I have seen "Bug," after a heavy gorge, quite "cupshotten," and in that mood he was very communicative and ready to give away the inner secrets of his soul. Sheikh Ahmed Khuz'am would eat it and "ingurgitate beyond all measure," as old Burton expresses it. In this state he became homicidal. *Kat* has its good qualities, and, like wine, it has been created to make man glad. A French writer has said that "La destinée des nations dépend de la manière dont elle se nourrissent," and Arabs who take to this habit in excess have an imbecile look and quickly get on the toboggan. Like the whisky habit, *Kat* is an acquired taste, and I never fancied the leaf. When Arabs reproved me for drinking liquor, I threw in their teeth their indulgence of *Kat*. When I said that the practice would be condemned by their Prophet, they replied it was a moot point, and the leaf was unknown in his time.

The Arabs were obsessed with the fear of an aeroplane. One morning we had let down from the terrace some native beds which were too big to allow of their passage by the corkscrew stairway. We used for the purpose some spare mule-ropes. In the late afternoon I was seated on the terrace smoking a cigar, when I saw at the top of the staircase the face of "Bug" peering at me. I called him towards me. He was angry and spoke sharply, bidding me deliver over my mule-ropes. I asked what he would with them, but he ignored my question and repeated his demand, which I peremptorily refused. "If thou give them not to me," he said, "thou shalt stay indefinitely in Bâjil." I replied that I was quite happy here, and Allah who had brought us would take us away in His own time; whereupon "Bug" slunk away muttering. He soon returned with the friendly Abu Hâdi, who laughingly told me what "Bug" really feared. "Bug"

himself stood in the doorway. What he feared was the aeroplane. He had seen us lowering the beds and he distrusted the ropes. If an aeroplane should come overhead, he pictured us throwing up the ropes to the observer, who would catch and secure them, and up this rope-ladder we missioners would climb, and be borne away to the "hangars" at Kamaran. I told him this idea was brilliant, and to ease his mind, I threw him the ropes, and he went out triumphant. An aeroplane did come on November 26th to reconnoitre our position. It dropped no bombs, as curiously reported in the May number of the journal of the *United Service Magazine* (1922). Nor, as there stated, did the aeroplane occasion our release, though as a contributory cause it had some value. We were released on the terms of the agreement that was forwarded from Hodeida. The chief contributory cause was a plot hatched with the Akils, or Headmen, of the four sections of the Kuhra tribe. These men were angry with their Sheikhs for detaining us, and they feared British retaliation. For two months before our release Abu Hâdi was busy arranging the details of an Akil rising. When the plot had matured the Sheikhs, who got wind of it, were thoroughly alarmed, and they found it politic to forestall events by entering into *pourparlers* with the Political Officer at Hodeida. M.N. the Bey mainly, and myself, induced the Sheikhs to send down a deputation to the coast. While these *pourparlers* were in actual progress the aeroplane visited us, though I had deprecated its arrival. One morning it came over Bâjil. The engine went wrong and a forced landing was hardly averted. It was a market-day, and the town was thronged by armed tribesmen, who panicked at the sight, and fired recklessly at the apparition as it circled overhead. When the aeroplane went off, the excited populace turned their attention to us, and a steady fusillade was poured into our building for a space of some fifteen minutes. Seated on the ground within the room, our revolvers in hand, we awaited the end. Abu Hâdi's guard behaved valiantly and manned the ramparts. Bullets crashed through the windows, and débris fell

upon us from the ceiling. There was a stampede towards our mules. One fellow downstairs drew a bead on the "son-of-the-King's-sister," but a friendly Arab knocked him down. One fanatic rushed upstairs with drawn *jambiya* vowing vengeance on Jacob, but his course was arrested. The whole place was in a turmoil. The Saiyid community and the Sheikhs, stripped to the waist, strove to appease the mob, and at last they succeeded. The Bey came upstairs panting and pale with excitement. I gave him a chair, but for several minutes he could not speak. The Sheikhs rushed up in alarm and asked if we were hurt. The Bey found some of us smoking cigars. He was dumbfounded, and, turning to me, he said: "I cannot understand you British; would to God I could infuse some warm Turkish blood into your veins! See you not that you are in extreme danger, while he of Hodeida is drinking whiskies and sodas on the beach." He then summoned my would-be assailant. I begged him to think no more of it, for the man had panicked with the rest. The Bey then drew himself up, and he was short of stature. For a brief moment he recalled the good old days of his Governorship, and envisaged his former splendour.

"Please recollect," said he, "that I am in authority here, not you!" Then, quickly recovering, he became once more his kindly self. He had sensed his present position. He was a helpless spectator. The palmy days of his authority were over, and he knew it. The next day the offender was arrested and thrashed *coram populo* by the hands of Abu Hâdi, the *Arab* Governor.

The *volte-face* of the Sheikhs made it necessary to cancel the planned *émeute* of the Akils, who with difficulty could be persuaded to abandon their programme. The mission was released on the 12th December, 1919, after the Friday prayers. If the Sheikhs had relented at the last moment, the Akils' proposal would have operated on the Monday following. The scheme was to have shot or arrested the Sheikhs, and to have conducted the mission to the sea.

Before attending the midday prayer, the Sheikhs

handed back intact the whole of the confiscated property. Nothing was lacking! "Give us a receipt in full," they said, "for we cannot worship until full restitution has been acknowledged." I gave the acknowledgment at once. "But thou hast not counted the contents of the boxes." "Nor you when you took over," I replied, "and the Great Government regards not such trifles."

It was Allah, the "Causer of Causes," who effected our release. It is idle to have cited indirect causes. The Iliad states the case inimitably:

> If thou hast strength, 'twas heaven that strength bestowed,
> For know, vain man, thy valour is of God.

The Koranic consolation had often filled my thoughts: "Nought shall befall us, save Allah's decree for us. He is our Liege-Lord, and on Allah let the believers repose." And yet another grand verse. Its cadence is sonorous: *Ainamā takunû yudrikukumu'l mautu, wa lau kuntum fi burûjin mushaiyadatin*—"Wherever ye be, death shall o'ertake you, yea, even if ye be ensconced in loftiest towers."

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### "KINGS OF ARABIA"

THE Turks have gone, and chaos reigns supreme in the Arabian Peninsula. Each Arab potentate is "playing for his own bat." Cohesion and co-operation have gone by the board. There is indeed no Arab "side" and no Arab captain.

Throughout the war, Cairo and the Foreign Office backed King Husein, saying, forsooth, that all others were unknown, but then Cairo laboured to keep all others in the background. Ibn Sa'ûd of Nejd was encouraged to punish Ibn Rashid and to take Hâïl, but it was thought impolitic to supply him freely with the sole means to this end—arms and ammunition—lest he use these to press back his rival Husein. There is still a belief in Husein's superiority, and we expect the recognition by all other Kings of his "nominal suzerainty." We fondly hope that these others will take our lead and welcome Husein's overlordship even over their own several subjects, provided he shall work through the recognised titular heads. This is a great expectation, but lacks foundation, and must lead to bitter disappointment. I do not know what these visionaries pretend by a *nominal* suzerainty. If it is merely nominal, things remain precisely as they are. Husein does not figure at all other than the bare King of Hijaz. He cannot exercise suzerainty, as suggested, over the subjects of Ibn Sa'ûd, of the Imam, and of the Idrisi—neither directly nor indirectly. The votaries of this political creed have misunderstood the Arab hegemony. All that is possible is a formation of *equal* states, no one state preponderating, for I am convinced that Husein is not *primus inter pares* in Arabia.

It is true that certain of our Shâfa'i (Sunni) Protégés, after reading King Husein's wartime proclamations,

indited letters of congratulations to that Arab King. In these they styled him " Our Lord and Master, *Commander of the Faithful,* and Guardian of the two Shrines." This action was prompted by the Turkish onslaught on the Kaaba. It was an outburst against the Turkish armies, and, in spite of the highest honours given to Husein, was not a crusade against the supremacy of the Turkish Caliph, with whom they had no quarrel. It rather revealed their adhesion to the British side, and a condemnation of Turkey, who had adopted an anti-Islamic rôle. They knew King Husein was our horse and a likely winner.

The war with Turkey is over, and Turkish rule in Arabia is dead, but serious ill-feeling is rife amongst the various Arab rulers who are fighting over the carcass.

Husein is up against both Ibn Sa'ûd and the Idrisi. The Imam is opposing the Idrisi, who snarls back his defiance. Ibn Sa'ûd would filch certain provinces in 'Asîr, where the feeling is pro-Wahhabi and anti-Idrisi. If any combination of Arabs were at all possible, it would take the form of an alliance between Husein and the Imam against the counter-claims of the Amir of Nejd coupled with the Idrisi, who finds it politic to agree with his powerful neighbour whiles in the way with him. These alliances would only be short-lived, for

*Nul n'est content de son chapeau,*
*Chacun voudrait une couronne ;*

or, *Arabicè*—the Arab rulers—will never string their arrows to one common bow.

The Sykes-Picot Treaty conflicted with our promises to King Husein. The situation was admittedly a most difficult one. One party had to be disappointed, and so to placate King Husein, the weaker party, we created two kingships for his sons. To Faisal we gave Irak. Transjordania fell to his brother Abdallah. We were in the position of one who has made a losing bet and feels he must " hedge." In the time of Francis I the French author Pasquin paid a high tribute to Britons when he wrote that the French called their creditors *des*

*Anglais*, because of the facility with which the English gave credit to them in all treaties, though they themselves had broken so many! The French have no reason to change their view to-day. As regards our treatment of the other party, I would quote the remarks made by Senator De Martino, the Governor of Cyrenaica, to a famous British traveller: "C'est une mauvaise politique de promettre, et de ne pas tenir bon. C'est l'erreur qu'a fait l'Angleterre. Ici on a confiance en moi, parce qu'on sait que je tiendrai ma parole." This statement recalls the Chinese beatitude: "Blessed be the man who bloweth his own trumpet, for whoso bloweth not his own trumpet, that same shall in no wise be blowed!"

Considering the circumstance of our dilemma, I think we clambered out of the slough fairly well, so far as Husein *père et fils* were concerned, but I will revert to this matter later, for there exist in all transactions others besides the principals, and these will have their say.

Let us shortly examine the attitude and the *obiter dicta* of the various Arab Kings to-day.

Husein's policy throughout the war was to consolidate his position as independent Amir of Mecca and the ruler of the Hijaz, but he had further claims to a portion of 'Asîr, itself an integral part of the Yemen; and so he demurred to the act of our Navy, who took Kunfidha, which they gave over to the Idrisi of Sabia. He told me once in Jedda that the Idrisi was a mean fellow and an interloper. At another time he expressed himself very contemptuously by saying "the Idrisi was a man who was not recognised by anyone to be anything at all, for he had made himself Sheikh, and had landed in some place which was not ruled by anyone." He recognised the leading part the Yemen had played in Arab history, and instanced its frequent mention in the Koran. The Imam he liked, but he qualified his praise with the remark that his rule extended over Zeidis only. He poured the vials of his wrath on Ibn Sa'ûd. He had offered Ibn Sa'ûd 500 camelry for the capture of Ḥâïl, but added that if the latter could not make good in three months he would himself do the needful. With Ibn Rashid,

the Master of Hâîl, he essayed a pact, despite the fact that this ruler was pro-Turk and fighting our ally (and his, too) Ibn Sa'ûd of Riâd. The *end* in view was the same, namely the breaking up of Turkish ascendancy, and where force failed, he thought diplomacy might succeed. Husein ridiculed the ability of his rival to capture Hâîl, and then naïvely remarked that if Ibn Sa'ûd were allowed to succeed, ceaseless fighting would result, and the consequent disunion of the Arabian nation. Husein was jealous of the success of any other Arab King. He asked Ibn Sa'ûd, rather, to send a few of his warriors to join himself against the Turks, for was not Husein the leader of the Arab " Movement " ? Nejd was a constant obsession with Husein. The *Ikhwân* were held everywhere in dread, but Ibn Sa'ûd's hold of these fanatics was real, as we have seen in a former chapter, and Mr. Philby, our authority in matters Nejdean, was never anxious about a serious recrudescence of Wahhabism. Not so, however, Amir Faisal, who " saw red " whenever Ibn Sa'ûd was mentioned. He believed this select band of preachers would expand until their tenets were held by the entire tribesmen, and so Faisal was glad to see his brother Abdallah carrying on a side-show against Ibn Sa'ûd. Faisal's aim was to unite the peoples of Arabia under his father's flag, and so to strangle the heretical faith in the desert. If, said he, we fail, all our other victories over the Turks go by the board.

Amir Abdallah the brother went so far as to suspect the Idrisi's attitude. He believed that Saiyid Muhammad had a secret understanding with the Turks—or was it, perhaps, King Husein's jealousy of the Idrisi's bid for power?

Your evil opinion of another is often the mirror held up to yourself, and a clear reflection of your own mental condition. This same Abdallah, hoping to curtail the Idrisi's influence, wished to reinstate the House of Ibn 'Âid in J. 'Asîr, and to make him master of the B. Magsheid, B. Malik, and B. Alkum. He saw no objection to the Idrisi's expansion towards Kunfidha and the hilly district to its east, provided the tribes accepted him; but this

it was the policy of the Hijaz House to prevent. Abdallah would even sanction the Idrisi movement against Hodeida. Oh, guileless Abdallah! This Amir was also very suspicious of Imam Yahya's intentions. He squinted enviously towards the Yemen, and presumed that, since we had no treaty with that ruler, we should raise no objection to his father, Husein, attacking him, if he proved intractable! Truly the folk of the Hijaz have Gargantuan mouths! We have put too much money on the Hijaz steed. It is safer in politics, as in horse-racing, to put your money on both ways. To work for the supreme elevation of Husein and Co. is to disintegrate Islam in Arabia—a hard saying, but true.

*The Times*, in a leader of 27th June, 1923, discusses the scheme of Arab confederation, but says the initiative must proceed from any or all of the Arab states named and belonging to the Near Eastern group. One or more of these must express a desire to enter into an association with another or others for Customs or other purposes, and this association is to be " with a view to an eventual Confederation."

The whole idea is too Utopian for serious consideration. It is a case of *hoc volo, sic jubeo*, and will never function.

So impressed was Egypt with Husein's leadership of Arabs, and the necessity of dry-nursing his fictitious position, that it feared to declare the Imam's plea for independence, lest Husein become dejected; but, truly speaking, the Hijaz movement was abortive in the absence of Lawrence and his lieutenants. No Arab ruler did anything of importance in the war. I do not decry the value of their services in the main as passive spectators, for this had a decidedly moral effect on the Turco-German combination, and held up to ridicule their farcical representations of a Holy War. Islam was, in fact, on the side of the Allies, and the long-winded manifesto to Islam issued by Turkey's Sherifial nominee, Haidar Ali, was too obviously Hun-inspired seriously to direct Moslem action in hostility to our cause.

I have spoken of Husein's condescending attitude towards the Imam of Sana. He in his turn made no

hero of Husein. Writing on one occasion to this King, the Imam remarked on the many aspirants to the style of "Commander of the Faithful," thus hinting that he who himself had assumed this office would brook no rival!

Quite apart from the jealousies of the various Kings *inter se*, some of these were fearful of our own ulterior motives. Both Faisal and Abdallah sought a definite statement from us that the allies had repudiated the annexation of Arab countries after the war. Special mention was made of Irak, Palestine, and Syria. Faisal was apprehensive of Europeans being allowed to cross Arabia, lest the world should say his father had sold the Hijaz to the British. This fear for the future it was that made the Idrisi so chary of letting our officers step on shore at Jeizan before nightfall. Only after my protestations and chaff did he relax his rule. The Italians, he told me, often during the war with Turkey visited Maidi and Jeizan, but their officers never went ashore. The Arab is ever apt to scent ulterior aims. I remember when in Jedda in 1917 noticing, after a heavy rainfall, that stagnant and noisome pools of water stood everywhere, fouling the air and breeding mosquitoes. When I expressed surprise that these pools were not drained, our British Agent, Colonel Wilson, told me that extreme care was taken to avoid what might be construed as officious interference in municipal affairs, for such would give occasion to enemy propagandists to accuse us of annexationist aims. The French Mission at Jedda, on the other hand, lived in comparative luxury, but the French had taken no part in the capture of Jedda and their presence on sacred soil could cause no uneasiness to the Arab mind.

King Husein is a genial and kindly old gentleman. His manners are superb. He was genuinely anti-Turk throughout the war, but it is wise to remember that he, with all his brother-rulers, craved Arab independence, and were very quick to foresee the possibility of falling from Scylla into Charybdis. I feel sure that if it was a choice between the Turks and ourselves as *overlords*, the Arab Kings to a man would elect the Turks. It is a reversion to type, or, rather, the call of Islam. The fact

that we had other friends amongst the Arabs than himself aroused Husein's antipathy towards them. News flies apace in Arabia, and Husein had heard of the manœuvres that were engineered by the Idrisi Saiyid to oust the Imam Yahya in favour of an Arab Confederacy joined by a nominee from the Imamic House. This nominee was one Saiyid Muhammad bin Mohsin of Huth, although other alternative men were cited, namely Muhammad ibn al Mutawakkil of Al Suda, and Yahya bin Muhammad al Hadi, and the idea was to inaugurate an *Arab Imamate* independent of King Husein. This was naturally resented by the King. The Confederacy's nominee was to throw in his lot with the Idrisi, who would thus be free to divide amicably with him the spoils of the Turks. In the words of the Shawaf, a Bakîl clan of J. Barat, who were the Idrisi's spokesmen in Aden, the new choice would win the respect of all, whether Shâfa'i, Zeidi, or Isma'iliya, and they added these words all pregnant with truth—"There is no great religious difference between the various religious persuasions; there is but one *din*, or religion, one book, and one duty prescribed to all Moslems." This formula I have preached in season and out of season. I was able to check this new scheme, for it was highly impolitic to strengthen the influence of the Idrisi, already too ascendant in the Yemen.

It was clear that King Husein thought imperially. His day of preferment had come, thanks to the beneficent Allah. His was the prayer offered by Moses when he had helped the two daughters of Shu'aib (Jethro) at the well, and would take one of them to wife: "O my Lord, of the good Thou hast caused me to meet with I stand in need." Husein required a richer country. The revenues of the Hijaz did not suffice him, and he looked to the more fertile tracts of Damascus and Irak. Again, at Damascus and at Baghdad had sat the Umayyid and Abbasid Caliphs, and even if Husein himself did not look for Caliphate distinction, his people did so look. The Arab proverb says, *ma la yushb'ik yujaww'ik*—"What fails to satiate thee increaseth thy appetite."—and the King's appetite was fully whetted. His flag, by whomever

invented, expresses his aims without commentary. The colours are laid horizontally and are from top to bottom black, green, and white, while a red burgee pennant is drawn across them. The three colours represent severally the Abbasid, Alid, and Fatimid Houses, and the red flag of the Hashimi Prophet includes and overshadows them. The meaning he would convey is obvious. The flag is a strikingly gorgeous emblem, and these are the colours of the "Nahda" riband which was devised to commemorate the "Arab Movement."

I believe King Fuad of Egypt has recently changed the colours of his flag to signalise his independence of Turkey, though here the crescent and the star are both retained. Maryatt, in his *King's Own*, makes the curiously blundering remark, "I think the banner of the Moslems should have borne the dog instead of the crescent, as an emblem of blind fidelity and tacit submission."

Much has been written of the assumption by Husein of the title of King. Egypt, I think, did not understand Husein's action. It was intended to refute the propagandists who stated that Great Britain aimed at the annexation of the Arab principalities. Husein would evince his independence, and the flag is an emblem of sovereignty. Mr. Philby, in his *Heart of Arabia*, says: "The British Government had conferred on Husein the style of King of the Hijaz, but, not considering this an adequate description of the rôle he aspired to play in the affairs of Arabia, he had arrogated to himself the more comprehensive title of *Malik Bilad al 'Arab*, or *Malik diyar al Arabiyya*, the King of the Arab countries, and all attempts to argue him out of this position were met by the complete and sufficient retort that it would be much easier to become King of the Arabs by dint of being so addressed than to earn the right of being so addressed by becoming King of the Arabs." This is a bit ungenerous. He further says, "The King had trained his Court to address him in public by the horrible appellation of *Jalalatukum*." This style, however, is quite in order, and is only "Your Majesty." The more priestly style, and befitting his office, is *Siyâdatkum*—

Your Holiness—and this is yet another designation of Husein.

As to the words *Malik al 'Arab*, I see nothing incongruous in them. The style "King of the Arabs" might be borne severally and collectively by each King of Arabia without giving offence to any of the Kings. Husein might have used the more cumbrous periphrasis *Malik min mulûk al 'Arab*, or *one* of the Kings of the Arabs, but the phrase he has selected means just that. It is not necessary to read into it the words "the sole King of Arabs," though the Arabic includes both "a" and "the." Let him, however, be styled "The King of the Arabs," and he is so, indeed, without an emphasis on the definite article employed. There is a noteworthy precedent for his style. The Dâ'i 'Imrân bin Muhammad b. Saba, of the Zurayite Dynasty, A.H. 548–560, adopted the designation of "The unparagoned among the Kings of the Age, *King of the Arabs* and of the Yemen," and King Husein could lawfully so subscribe himself, exchanging the last word, as he does, to the King of the Hijaz. I prefer Husein's explanation to Mr. Philby's. The title of my book I have adopted from the Septuagint version of the seventy-second Psalm, where the words used are, "Kings of the Arabs and of Saba shall bring gifts." I prefer the rhythm of the words I have chosen, but the meaning is one and the same, save to the captious critic!

I have alluded to our office of King-maker. Surely both Faisal and Abdallah are out of their proper setting. They are square men in round holes. I think it is not merely a question of placating King Husein for his disappointment in Syria. I believe the British public would like to know rather what the *peoples* there think of the choice. Do the peoples want these rulers? Did a *plebiscite* really elect them? If this is so, we need not further cavil. The *Near East*, in a recent number, says that against a hostile Turkey the Irakis unaided stand no chance, and for salvation they must depend either on British protection or the maintenance of a friendly relationship with the Turks. Precisely so, but why

assume Turkey's hostility? I have quoted in chapter x. the assurance of Sa'id Pasha that the Turks cannot stand the expense and trouble of outlying dependencies. Many Turks have echoed this sentiment. I believe the Nationalist leaders of to-day in Turkey are claiming Mosul more on the score of their *suzerain rights* than from any propensity to pilfer Arab property or to wound Arab susceptibility If we became, as we might well become, the fast friend of Turkey, there would be no question of Turkish aggrandisement in that quarter, and our backs turned, and Faisal left strictly alone, this King of Irak would quickly turn to his *quondam* friends and brethren in Islam, and the twain in unison would live happily for ever after. Not only so, but the triple cord of England, Turkey, and the Irak State could repel any conceivable hostile incursion. The first essential, then, it seems, is a treaty of friendship with Turkey, and a full approval of the national choice of the new Caliph. The first step, I believe, lies with us, and all thereafter will be *couleur de rose*. Faisal will soon see that his best interests are conserved by an alliance with our friend the Turk.

Sir Arnold Wilson, whose labours in Irak have secured him a well-earned reputation, once quoted Bacon's essay *Of Plantations*, in support of Faisal's claim to the country. He was combating the slogan of the " Bag and Baggage " policy. " It is the sinfullest thing in the world to forsake or destitute a plantation once in forwardness; for besides the dishonour, it is the guiltiness of blood of many commiserable persons." These are the concluding words of that essay, and they are fraught with political wisdom. I will quote the earlier words of that essay as a set-off to his argument, and will let others decide the issue. " I like a plantation in a pure soil; that is, where people are not displanted, to the end to plant in others; for else it is rather an extirpation than a plantation." These, too, are memorable words.

The road to progress in Arab affairs has been strewn with difficulties, and not the least of these was the existence of opposite camps. The Government of India was

anti-Husein, and would gladly have seen his collapse, both on religious grounds and as removing a cause of estrangement between Indian Moslems and the Government. Egypt was pro-Husein and ignored all other candidates. The Pan-Arab Party, matured in Cairo, was an active advocate of Husein's claim to supremacy. Two of the party came to Aden and wished to go to the Imam. The Imam was not anxious to adhere to any such programme. He preferred to wait and watch the trend of events. One of these Arab missionaries was of the family of Al Murâwa'a, the priestly village near Hodeida, but resident in Egypt and a member of the *Ma'âshirat al 'Arab* there. His views were coloured by his environment. He threw out a suggestion that the Sultan of Egypt would be a suitable candidate for the Caliphate! He said that the Yemen loathed the Turks, who did not allow the people to take from it even a piece of match-wood (Kibrit 'ûd). I saw no advantage resulting from the interference of such busybodies, and sent this gentleman home to Cairo. His fellow would put King Husein in possession of Hodeida! The war generated a swarm of Arab experts. They were like the caterpillars—innumerable, and were irresponsible. I have spoken elsewhere of "L.G.'s Myrmidons." This designation was given me by one of the Foreign Office staff, who was greatly inconvenienced by the "quick-change" stunts of these gentlemen in mufti. Another busybody who now holds high office in the East was styled one of "Montague's Migrants." There are other ways of winning a war than by fighting.

The question of the Caliphate is too delicate a one for Christian hands or brains to meddle with. The hub of the Moslem world to-day, at any rate so far as we are concerned, is in India, and India will never tolerate an Arab Caliph. If, argues Moslem India, the Turks did fire into the Kaaba, it was the rebellion of Husein that drew the fire, and so he was accounted responsible.

On the subject of King Husein's position in Arabia, I will let a notable citizen of Aden speak. He was for many years my close friend, and his shrewd insight into

Yemeni politics and unique knowledge of Arabia, were ever placed at my disposal. He was of the Isma'iliyan sect, but his influence in the Yemen was recognised by the votaries of all religious schools, and by his years and piety he won the respect of all. He has now passed over to the mercy of Allah. He would descant on the unpopularity of King Husein with other Arab rulers, and this was due to his long tutelage to the Turkish régime at Mecca, and his alliance with them, notably in the crusade against the Idrisi Saiyid, when he had to retire discredited to Al Tâïf. He then started to fight Ibu Sa'ûd, but was equally unsuccessful. All this was done to placate his masters the Turks; but while he who slaps you may forget, the slapped one always remembers —*al lâtim yansa wa'l maltûm fa lâ.* Catching a glimpse of his possible independence, Husein then made a *volte-face*, and this action prompted the Turks to send out, according to ancient custom, a substitute in the person of Haidar Ali. If, before the war, Husein had gone about to propitiate the other Arab rulers, the various Ashrâf and Sâda, and the tribesmen, and had leagued himself with them by a pact to expel the Turks from the Peninsula, all these would, he believed, have now acknowledged Hijaz's spiritual supremacy.

It is possible that the efforts to-day of the Colonial Office may succeed in making the various Kings of Arabia concentrate on their points of agreement rather than on their points of difference. They would then see things in their true perspective. The result would be far reaching, and an object-lesson to those who have seen in the Arab opposition to Turkey an ill-conceived attack on the unity of Islam. This desideratum is best achieved if we ourselves stand in the background. Reforms come from within, and all manœuvrings and meddlings from without will defeat the end in view. Above all, we must exercise patience and not expect to see reforms rapidly maturing.

> O Time, thou must entangle this, not I.
> It is too hard a knot for me to untie.

This is on the lines of Lao-Tzŭ's advice to leave all things to take their natural course and not to interfere.

Let us, however, not deceive ourselves. Union there will never be. All we can hope is a unity in diversity. The Prophet said, "Verily my people's destruction shall be by the sword; the pen has written what shall be." There is still time to counteract the *animus* wrought by the war. There is yet another *dictum* of the Prophet's, but I do not follow its esoteric meaning: "Verily the religion will take refuge in Medina as a serpent in a hole, and will betake itself from Al Hijâz and find refuge somewhere else, as an ibex seeks protection in the mountain top." Let us do nothing to facilitate a breach in Islam. It will result in the isolation and death of the Arab nation, whom we have taken under our wing, and for whose newness of life we have become responsible.

I am no believer in the pessimistic prediction of the late Danish traveller Barclay Raunkiaer. I give the quotation at some length, for it is wisdom to understand the mischievous programme to which some croakers have subscribed. In his *Through Wahhabiland on Camel-back* he wrote:

> The countries between Europe and India are playing a steadily increasing part in the politics of the world; and the fact is of vital importance even to their remotest recesses. Still, as of yore, the towns, the small states, and the nomads are warring from Kuweit to Aden, and from Muskat to Sinai, wildly and bloodily, in the ingenious belief that they act of their own free will to avenge real and imagined insult, and to feather their own nests. Little do they know that in all their seeming exercise of freedom they are really subserving a great political game. As involuntarily as chessmen they are being moved upon the inexorable principle of *divide et impera*, preserving the while their old customs and habits, their freedom, their picturesque rags, and all the rest of that sun-filled *mise-en-scène* which blinds the people to the truth that its days are numbered. . . . Lulled by the proud consciousness of the fullness of their power, enjoying to the full their daily-prized freedom, cultivating friendly relations with another Great Power beyond the sea . . . the native states are gliding quietly and imperceptibly towards the last phase—their final absorption. In that absorption this community, in

itself so low in the scale, shall indirectly and unintentionally fulfil a mission of civilisation; for like a moth which flies into the light, it will make the candle burn brighter by its own annihilation.

Then comes his final peroration—what the Irish call "the trot for the avenue"—

Verily the beneficent policy which can subdue the most utterly bigoted and arrogant people on earth to its ènds, with so little friction and such masterly dexterity, must fill every watcher of the modern politics of the East with the profoundest admiration!

All I can say is I thank God the future of the Arab nation is entrusted to British hands, and surely our policy and our aims must be directed to the conservation, and not the annihilation, or the absorption, of this race. The Arabs shall not disappear. Their ancient glories must revive. And yet, what is this haunting fear that will not be quieted? Listen to the mournful numbers of Burton's *Kasida*:

Where are the crown of Kaikhosru, the sceptre of Anushirwan,
The holy grail of high Jamshed, Afrasyab's hall? Canst tell me, man?
Gone, gone, where I and thou must go, borne by the winnowing wings of death,
The horror brooding over life, and nearer brought with every breath,
Their fame hath filled the seven climes,
They rose and reigned, they fought and fell,
As swells and swoons across the wold
The tinkling of the camel's-bell.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### THE FUTURE OF THE YEMEN

THE precise boundaries of the Yemen are not easily defined, and experts differ. One authority places the province in South Arabia, and would include all countries between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf that lie to the south of Jabal Tathlith, in latitude 20° N. and longitude 44° E., with the province of 'Umân. Another assigns the tracts south of Tathlith, but extending at the most to a distance of 200 miles eastwards from the eastern coast of the Red Sea; while a third description prefers a province lying to the south of Sana and westward of the great mountain-chain situate to the east of this town. By this last designation the Yemen does not extend so much as one-half the distance from that chain towards the Red Sea, nor much more than one-half the distance between Sana and Aden.

Arab cartographers say the Yemen comprises the districts of Hadramaut, Mahra, 'Umân, and also Nejrân. It is called the *Yemen* because it lies to the right of the Kaaba as the old star-worshippers faced towards the east, just as Al Shâm, or Syria, was the country of the *left* hand which gives its name to the northern quarter. The Tihama is the low-lying and sun-baked terrain situate between the Yemen and the Hijaz. The Hijaz in its turn is so termed as *separating* the Tihama from Nejd. The uplands of Nejd touch Syria on the north, 'Irâk to the east; on the west is the Hijaz, and Al Yemâma lies to the south. Al Yemâma falls between Nejd and the Yemen, and is styled *Al 'Arûd*, because it obstructs itself between the other two provinces.

So say the authorities. It is enough for this sketch roughly to place the Yemen in the S. and S.W. of the Arabian Peninsula.

Various conquerors have come to the Yemen, but they

have not endured. Romans, Abyssinians, Persians, Egyptians, and Turks, the last the most persistent, all have been. The Abyssinians have left their mark in the person of the " Khâdim " (plural Akhdâm), who is the scavenger to-day. He is believed to be the offspring of an Abyssinian and Arab *liaison*. The Abyssinians, indeed, way back in history, had lived in Southern Arabia, and passed along and away westward, yielding to the pressure of new Arab dynasties. To-day the Yemen presents the picture of the Latin poet Propertius, who called it " Arabia Intacta," the Virgin Araby, when he indited a eulogy of Cæsar Augustus and foretold the success of his lieutenant Ælius Gallus in 24 B.C., who, however, failed before Mariaba. To-day is again the day of Arab supremacy, if we will let the Arabs severely alone. The Arabs look to England to secure their independence.

The Imam of Sana is the residuary legatee of the Turks in the Yemen. None other than he can carry on their administration, certainly not we who have steadily declined to expand from Aden—still less the Idrisi parvenu. Looking to the Turkish predilection for the Imam, and to his long historic *nexus* with the Yemen, it was criminal on our part to have let the Idrisi enter Hodeida, the port of Sana. We have stultified ourselves by so doing, inasmuch as we have interfered to allocate metes and bounds to these rival rulers. The expansion of our trucial chief, the Idrisi, into the sphere claimed by the Imam is read by the latter as a breach of our undertaking to hold strictly aloof from the province.

Hodeida was not ours that we should give it permanently to anyone ; nor did the Idrisi win this territory from the Turks in the war. When the Peace Treaty with Turkey is signed and ratified, it will be our first duty to eliminate the Idrisi from realms to which the Imam alone has prescriptive title. Hodeida is the leading port of Sana.

A great deal that has been written on the future of the Yemen must be retracted now that, the war over, we see more clearly the wood after the removal of some of the

trees. Far better for the peace of the Yemen had we introduced some rank outsider into Hodeida, the while we were trying to come to terms with the Imam. I have in chapter xi. given the object of the mission to the Imam in 1919, and the chaos since introduced is solely of our making. You cannot have two Kings in the Yemen "both smelling at one nosegay."

With the exit of the Turks our borderline goes. We made our inland treaties in the face of an expanding Turkey, and to safeguard the rights of Arabs, for the payments of whose stipends we had made ourselves responsible in 1839, when we shouldered the liabilities of the Sultan of Lahej. These stipends are of the nature of blackmail. Later treaties had the same end in view—the deliverance of Arabs from Turkish expansion. The *raison d'être* of all these engagements no longer holds. An Arab King has come forward and claims these Arabs as his ancestral heritage. The Imam has written to us that he never recognised the Turkish occupation of the Yemen, and their connivance at the treaties we made, he said, is no longer binding on himself. His ancestors, he affirms, ruled the country afore ever we came in to attach these tracts, and although he was prepared temporarily to waive his claims over our Protégés, he would reconsider the matter after the war. His Imamate was established everywhere over the Peninsula in olden times, and a love for his House was deeply ingrained in all Arabs, as is the soul in the body. He spoke truly when he asserted that for the sake of greed these folk had leaned to outsiders, but this fact should not bar their return to the fold when times had changed and Arab ascendancy was once more revived.

It was no argument to such pleading to say that new times demand new measures and new men; that much water had flowed 'neath the bridge, and the stream's set was not reversible. An Irredentist seeks his own, and even if the flock's return to their long-lost shelter shall require the gentle coercion of the sheep-dog, their latter end will be happier than their position to-day under the surveillance of a foreign power, even if that power be

England. To quote my favourite saw, " The hand is still thy hand, be it ever so leprous."

It is the call of Arab to Arab. The Shâfa'is, by their own admission, cannot combine. They have no one leader. Our Protégés are only nominally so. It is a purely courtesy title. We did not protect them in the Great War. We spend annually thousands of rupees on them, *quâ* stipends and presents, and we get no adequate return for the outlay. They take our gifts with both hands, and their remarks are not complimentary when they urge that " a piece of swine's flesh even is at times profitable."

Our Friendlies do not want us in their country. They come freely to Aden, but there is no reciprocity in these visits. I have shown that it is our largesse alone that attracts them. The Prophet said, " To every people is its calf, and the (golden) calf of my people is the dirham and the dinar."

I believe that we cannot be justly charged with a breach of faith if we let these go over and back to the Imam. Too much has been written of the hostility of the creeds, but all will flock to a strong Arab protector, who would regain and consolidate his former Kingdom, where once he ruled impartially over both Zeidis and Shâfa'is.

Our interests in the country can best be conserved by consolidating our position in Aden, and letting the interior develop on Arab lines. It is by trade that we can prosper. We are not getting our full measure of trade. Our goal should be production without possession, action without self-assertion, and development without domination. The day of our intervention is past. The policy of " divide and rule " has no meaning for us. If we require a buffer state, to bring into relief, as in India, the blessings of British rule, let us draw a line a little above Lahej, and cut the rest. The Imam has a paternal interest in the Abdali Sultan and would preserve the political freedom of his state, himself welcoming a buffer betwixt his territories and ours. In all other tracts he will appoint, as of yore, his own representatives, and Shâfa'is will be

left under the surveillance of Shâfa'i governors. Imam Yahya is a born diplomatist, and *capax imperii* without the qualification. This is our proper policy, and how different from the picture drawn of British methods by Mr. Havelock Ellis in *The New Spirit*. "To the English it has never been easy to find a *modus vivendi* with lower races. The very qualities which give us insular independence and toughness of fibre unfit us for the other task." He then contrasts with ours the Russian temperament and policy, which "is peculiarly adapted for mingling harmoniously even with the fiercest yellow races and bringing these into relation with the best European influences."

Listen to the following effusion from his pen: "If we English are certain to make little progress, where, as in Asia, the great task is conciliation, when it is a question of stamping out a race, then is our time! . . . On the whole we stamp them out as mercifully as may be, supplying our victims liberally with missionaries and blankets." All this is strange—but cruelly untrue.

The retention of our Arab stipendiaries in the face of a progressive Arab ruler is to divide Islam against Islam. The case in India is sometimes quoted as a parallel, but the parallel is inexact. British India and the confines of the Native States are interlaced, and again we are responsible for India as an integral whole. In the Yemen, on the contrary, Aden alone is British soil, and is isolated in one corner, and so the parcelling out of the interior is not our concern. We have not in this war conquered the Yemen.

My note-books are filled with the specious arguments of various sectaries who propose their several schemes for the future of the Yemen. The Confederacy of the Idrisi I have already outlined. It was intended solely to extend Idrisi influence in new tracts, but it was highly inexpedient to encourage one whose leanings were towards the Senusi faith. An influential Saiyid across the border advocated a close alliance with the Imam who, after the war, would arise as the strong man of the Yemen. He envisaged no other claimants to power.

An Aden notable declared that when the Turks went there was no one Arab ruler capable of ruling the country, owing to their divided counsels. It was possible, he said, for the British to enter the Yemen, if a wise policy were formulated, and " a man appear of sufficient strength and of divine endowments, when all would bow to his subjection," but he was wise to add: " God will do as seemeth Him best ! " My counseller was of the Isma'iliyan faith and had his own nominee at the back of his mind. He wrote the cryptic words *Imam al Hakk yaḏhhur*, and later explained the riddle of the numerical value of the letters, which gave the year of his hero's appearance as 1336 A.H.[1] Such an one when he appeared would assert his personal claims. He was careful to exclude the Idrisi, who, he said, fell very far short of the mark ! This legendary hero has yet to come !

The Kadi Abdul Rahman bin Ali al Harâzi appeared as the champion of the claims of the *Saif al Islam*, Saiyid Ahmed bin Kasim, who is a cousin of the present Imam and ranks second to him in the councils of state. This Shâfa'i Kadi would depose Imam Yahya and put up Ahmed bin Kasim in his place. This latter would be overlord of the Yemen, and would suffer the Shâfa'i leaders to manage their own affairs. This programme is of special interest as showing the belief of Shâfa'is in the Zeidi pre-eminence, and also the certainty of the smooth running of Shâfa'i underlings under the other's lead. This is the goal to which all turn, and it is the established policy of the present Imam of Sana, and can be illustrated by many examples already evidenced in the re-awakened Yemen.

Imam Yahya to-day is " stimied " from the sea by the Idrisi's position of Hodeida. Much has been written of the Farasan Treaty of January, 1917, and of our post-bellum obligations under it to the Idrisi. As I personally conducted this agreement in Jeizan, I may be allowed to interpret its meaning. It is quite incorrect to repeat *ad nauseam* that we are bound to arm the Idrisi against the Imam. The Idrisi would doubtless have liked to include specifically both the Imam and King Husein

[1] The Hijra year is now 1342.

in the category of those who were *after the war* to be kept off his domains by our forceful assistance, but Saiyid Muhammad well knew that the agreement would in that case never have seen the light of day. He knew precisely the meaning in Article 4, " His Majesty's Government undertakes to protect these islands and the Idrisi's seaboard from all hostile action, without any interference (note this proviso) on their part with his affairs and independence." He knew, and we knew, and he knew that we knew, that it was the *Turk* who was his prospective enemy after the war. He was ever most anxious not to offend the Turks, for, thanks to our old-time bias in their favour, we might easily leave them *in situ* in the 'Asîr Province, and he who had truckled to the Christian power would be subjected to their perpetual pin-pricks. This Treaty and its explanatory memorandum—and the two documents must be read together—covertly, if not overtly, refer to possible *Turkish* aggression. For obvious reasons, and chiefly to safeguard the Idrisi, no particular aggressor was named. The Idrisi knew that the Arab King Husein was our ally, and that we were equally desirous of including the Imam in the net of our friendship. We forbade the Idrisi's attack on the Imam unless the latter declared for the Turk, and this the Imam never did. It is interesting here to know the Idrisi's earlier prediction of the Yemen's future, and his belief in the coming of European powers to the Peninsula. It was clearly not a case of *Arab* ascendancy that would ever call for our assistance. He then prophesied that the Turks (his special bugbear) would leave the Yemen ; that the British would advance and take Sana and the country above it ; that the French would occupy Hodeida for a short time, and then hand over all the sea-coast towns to Holland (*sic*). It would, however, be reserved for a pro-British Moslem to rule in Jeddah, while Mecca would remain intact as before.

It is therefore patent that we have no pretext for abetting the Idrisi against the Imam, not even morally.

The Imam may be singled out of all the Arab Kings throughout the history of his House as the set foe of the

Turks. We see it from the days of Haines up to the 1911 pact with Turkey against "Infidel" Italy.

In 1915 the Imam had proposed to the Turkish Command in Sana that as their stay there was unprofitable to themselves, they should move away to the coast, and Ilias Bey, our Turkish informant, says the Imam offered to safeguard their arms and ammunition against the close of the operations! This clearly shows the Imam's aversion to their stay.

During the war the Imam was intent on bringing in the outlying provinces to his rule, and especially did his lieutenants work on our N.E. frontier. His motto was, in his own words, to cleanse the sacred terrain from infidelity; and the word *Kufra*, as in the Prophet's day also, was not directed solely against the leaven of Christianity, but included the tenets of some few of the rebellious Shâfa'i peoples. His policy was "to bring nigh those afar off, and to smooth over the rugged places." To reach the root of the Imam's nature we must glance at the chief facts of his life. He has been too often misrepresented. Man, says Emerson, is explicable by nothing less than all his history. I have been styled *pro-Imam*, while Lawrence was pro-Hijaz, and Philby pro-Nejd. These twain are able to defend themselves. As to myself, the sponsor of both treaties with the Idrisi, I liked the man, but I knew his limitations; and his value decreases, as do Faisal's and Abdallah's, when these all transgress their proper bounds. In the case of the Imam Yahya I am charged with "preaching on behalf of my saint," and that "'tis not his glass but I that flatters him!" As a matter of fact it is not the personality of the Imam I defend, although no ruler of his House has for many long years shown such capacity for an equitable and strong administration; but it is the office I champion and his long lineage—in other words, *C'est la robe qu'on salue*. The Imam is an apt illustration of the Sanskrit aphorism *gajendra iva darpane*, where the Lord of the Elephants is portrayed large or small in exact proportion to the size of the mirror which reflects him. It all depends on the viewpoint. It is easier, I know, to work

along the line of least resistance; to say, as an official of the Colonial Office said to me, the Imam did not help us in the war, and the Idrisi did, *ergo* one is our friend and the other our enemy. Certain mirrors are so constructed that even Apollo would be caricatured! One is tempted to ask: Can any good thing come out of Downing Street?

The Imam still looks to a treaty with the British. From our viewpoint a treaty is quite unnecessary and is an expense. As regards the Imam's interests, a treaty will tie his hands and detract from his aim of independence. "Thrice and four times happy are those that plant cabbages." The Imam longs for peace to recover the prosperity of "the auspicious Yemen." If the Idrisi were not in his port of Hodeida, the Imam would be free to open out commercially. He asks for a treaty with us because he wants to displace the intruder, and because our treaty with the Idrisi gives the latter, so he supposes, preferential treatment over himself. We say we require the mandate over the Yemen after the war. We require no such mandate at all. Throw open the Yemen to trade. Private enterprise is keen to step in, and if unfettered by "superior authority" (I hark back to the phraseology of Haines) it is such enterprise that will give us British all, and more than anything that officialdom and a treaty can secure. Mr. Ellis is right when he says that commerce, as it becomes a state function, will cease to absorb the best energy and enterprise of the world, and will become merely mechanical.

For over two years the Imam's envoy has sat at Aden, trying in vain to worry out a treaty. He has failed simply because the Imam wants Hodeida, and we do not know how to begin to get it from the wrongful grasp of the Idrisi.

The Imam wrote to his envoy as follows: "*If you can re-open the trade-routes, and get rid of the Idrisi* (the two are inseparably allied) *well and good; if not, return to Sana.*" That is the *crux* of the matter put in a nutshell. Why all this useless palaver and waste of time, and the wearing-out of Arab patience? Up to the present we

are prime favourites, and in his proposal for a treaty so far back as 1917, there was a clause stipulating for the exclusion of all Foreign Governments from the Yemen, and asking that no foreign merchant even should visit him without his previous sanction.

Imam Yahya cannot grasp our apathy towards himself, which appears as a thinly-disguised resentment. Why, he asks, after the mission returned to Hodeida in November, 1919, were the *pourparlers* not resumed as promised? He wrote to Aden a letter of mild remonstrance, and quoted this distich relative to our pro-Idrisi tactics: "He who ties up a mad dog at his door, on him is the blame if the folk are bitten." To judge from the Idrisi's attitude since he took Hodeida, the folk have already been severely bitten! Not the Idrisi himself, but his officials, have so bullied the inhabitants, and the dues imposed on import are so excessive, that many of the merchants have left for Aden. Some of the leading merchants there were arrested and confined in Meidi. History is repeating the days of Sherif Husein of Abu 'Arîsh, as detailed in the third chapter. Saiyid Abdul Kadir al Ahdal, the head of the Saiyid community of Al Murâwa'a, was deprived by the Idrisi of his nominal headship of Hodeida and vicinity, granted in terms of the temporary arrangement I made before leaving Bâjil. He therefore incited the restless Zerânîk tribesmen, who waylaid Idrisi goods and arms that were coming up from Aden to Jeizân. The Aden merchants, whose religious beliefs accord with those of the Idrisi, told me quite recently that they would prefer the advent of the heretical and Zeidi Imam, for his rule was just, and under him trade would flourish, for the trade-routes were now secure.

The traveller Bruce, who visited the Yemen in 1769 A.D., said of that day Imam that his Government was much more gentle than any *Moorish* Government in Arabia or Africa. Bruce gives a pleasing picture of the people, who were of gentler manners, the men being from early ages accustomed to trade. The women of Luhaiya were as solicitous to please as those of the most polished

nations in Europe, and though very retired, whether married or unmarried, " they are not less careful of their dress and persons."

Of the Idrisi's rule an Adenite quoted the following distich :

> We are vexed by a ruler who has oppressed folk, and then prayed.
> He is like to the butcher, who calls on God and then slaughters.

Yet another apt verse was quoted by the Imam. The speaker is the British Government, who were coquetting with their mistress the " Idrisi Laila " :

> We are *épris* with Laila, but she is attracted by others.
> Another (the Imam) is infatuated with us, but her we do spurn.

The Indian doctor and Political Officer attached to the Idrisi ruler wrote of the Idrisi's agrandisement from the Tihama to J. Reïma that it belied the latter's avowal of staying strictly in his natural sphere ; and I would remind this officer that the Idrisi has poached in the Tihama of the Yemen proper, and that his real home is in the 'Asîr lowlands, to the north. Saiyid Mustafa, the Idrisi's factotum and relative, when referring to his master's ambitions, said the Idrisi would not come further south than Luhaiya, which our Navy captured from the Turks and gave to the Idrisi. The Idrisi forces lost it shortly afterwards, and only came into occupation after the surrender of the Turks in 1918.

After the Armistice we made much ado because the Imám wrote to the Consuls of the various Allies in Aden calling their attention to his claims. I saw nothing untoward in this, although such appeal was from our point unnecessary, for were we not all one, and had we not received the Turkish surrender on behalf of our Allies ? The Imam's action did not convey to me any suspicion of intrigue, for we knew his feelings towards us,

and I have just above given his proposals to us in 1917 *quâ* a treaty. When, after the Armistice, we called upon the Imam to enforce the surrender to us of the Turks at Sana, he replied he found nothing in our telegram of what he had been led to expect. We talked of the surrender of the Turks, and said the matter of the Yemen's future would be hereafter discussed, but he would know first of all the decision of the Allied Governments and the assurance by the Ottoman Government that the suzerainty of the Yemen should revert to his hands as of yore. This attitude of Imam Yahya shows his belief in the unity of the Allies. The persons of envoys are sacrosanct, and even in Arabia the saying goes, *Al rasûl ka mursilihi*—"The agent must be accorded equal honours with his principal."

There has now come to the throne of Sabia a new Idrisi, and he is a young man. If only he will approach the Imam, independently of all others, some *rapprochement* may be possible. In the war, however, we built no hopes on such a reunion. All we hoped was to induce each one to operate in his own sphere. To-day our policy seems directed to keeping them apart! The Idrisi has already conflicting claims to his north with King Husein, and it is unnecessary to have embittered his relations with the Imam down south. It is certainly not a knowledge of the Yemen's history that has impelled our present policy.

It will be said that the Imam has himself proved aggressive, when his lieutenants crossed our old frontiers and came to Dala. He did so when he had an inkling of a change of our policy towards him, when my mission was at Bâjil. He saw the daily encroachment of the Idrisi and was sore perplexed to divine our intentions. I do not defend his action at Dala, but it is easy to detect the motives that impelled him. At the same time our neglect of the Hinterland since 1907, and the perpetual intrigues of Amir Nasr, first with the Turks and then with the Imam, confirmed the latter's belief that we had tired of our frontier commitments, and the way was open to him to push his Irredenta policy in this quarter

So I say that if we would fully endorse our gospel of non-intervention in Hinterland affairs—Lao Tzū calls it "intelligent inaction"—we should let these inconvenient tracts pass peacefully under the Imam's rule, and be thankful to Amir Nasr for furnishing us with an excuse for repudiating our treaty with him. It is a befitting answer to the Amir's tactics, and in the long run the kindest act towards him, to let him slide away from our control. So shall we get back to the old days of the Imam's dominion, when in 1630 he was left alone and unhampered by the Turks; and then under the rule of one strong man the Yemen will once again flourish. A Yemen so unified will look to us in full confidence. We cannot deal with a legion of jarring sects on our borders. The Imam looks to us at this juncture. Let it not be possible for him to re-echo the words of the poet, "They have neglected me, and what a man they have neglected! One who would serve them on the day of battle and in the breach."

. . . . . .

And now a few words of our policy in the Yemen since 1839. There has not been a fixed policy. Various Residents have held divergent views on the methods of treating the Arabs of the interior. The general principal, perhaps, has been a minimum of intervention, and this to-day is the correct policy after the passing of the Turks. We would steer clear of the charge of anglicising the Yemen. Even our oversight may become too close, and clash with the Arab demand for independence. Our intervention is "like the alloy in gold and silver which may make the metall worke the better, but it embaseth it."

Haines had his peculiar views. I have referred in chapter v. to the so-called *Keddah* system, where the many are controlled by the few. Haines was removed from Aden in March, 1854 (*vide* chapter iii.). He wrote from his detention in Bombay that his sudden removal had "prevented him from stimulating the tribes to a lasting peace." His policy was to induce the petty

Sheikhs to return to their hereditary allegiance to the Sultan of Lahej, for this coquetry with others had irritated their Liege Lord and was injurious to trade. None so firm a believer as Haines in the function of the "Eye of the Yemen" towards trade!

It is courteous to let him that is dead yet speak his own words: "My opinion is that much correspondence with the Arab is disadvantageous; it prolongs disputes and in the end will prove of no avail." Haines preferred in the main to conduct all communications with the interior by word of mouth. He left few notes for his successors. This was on a par with the practice of Colonel Hunter, whose advice to me on my first venture in Aden in 1897 was to work as far as possible by demi-official notes, although the official screeds to Government would bring more *kudos*! Haines had found by experience that his letters were altered by those who had their axes to grind. In my own time the letters of Imam Yahya have so been tampered with by Arabs interested in furthering their private ends. "More will be done," continues Haines, "in a personal conference of a few hours" (the Arab requires *many* hours) "than in a month's correspondence. Goodwill, kindness, and respect will also do more than even the bayonet in Arabia." It was Cicero who wrote, "Nothing is so popular as goodness," or *bonitas*. Haines noted that his successor had entered upon an exactly opposite system, and had differed with himself, who held one chief responsible for the security of the trade routes. The other had expressed his feelings as an Englishman that justice and equal goodwill should be shown to all.

I agree with Brigadier C—— had he Europeans to deal with; but he has Arabs, who are most difficult to control, and I may add almost impossible, as Turks have found in Hijaz and Yemen to their cost after nearly fifty years' experience. Carrying out his views, the officiating Political Agent has commenced a correspondence ["Not true."—A.C.], and this change of system, which time will test, will prove detrimental, and only tend to embroil the English with the tribes; for in attempting to enter into agreements with the Fadli direct, offence and jealousy will be

created in the breast of Lahej, thus placing ourselves between two fires, and by the course adopted to extinguish one, he will fan the flame and incense the other, leaving the bone of contention as it was, without any opening whereby to gain a permanent peace. Our European ideas of equity and politics will not be comprehended by the Arabs.

Long experience with Arabs (upwards of thirty years) has taught me that they must be defeated with their own weapons, by quietly letting them know you perceive their intentions before they are prepared to carry them out, and by letting them feel you are their superiors in tact, intellect, judgment, and integrity of purpose—that their secret thoughts are known to you, that your information is sure, secret, and correct, and that you are prepared to counteract their designs. This, united with frankness and firmness, decision and consistency, will secure an Englishman his point, and he will have moral power over them, be respected and feared. They will afterwards give him little trouble."

However much some may differ with Haines, it is clear that his trumpet gave no uncertain sound.

Had I remained in power another month, I should, through Sultan Ali of Lahej's power, influence, and money, have, I think, secured a permanent peace. By treating with the Fadli chief direct, that chieftain will foolishly think he can ask his own terms and, knowing as I do that his vanity, pride, and independence are excessive, I shall not be surprised if ere long he writes insolently and demands a sum of money or an increased stipend. The Fadli is a snake in the grass that will bite as opportunity offers. His acquaintance is by no means desirable, and as his territory does not reach our immediate frontier, it is better to deal with him through the Lahej faction, who can watch his every movement, who are Arabs like himself and his neighbours, and have known his character from childhood.

"

This is the *Keddah* system personified. The Court of Directors, who appointed to Aden in 1854 the distinguished soldier Colonel James Outram, remarked:

We do not desire that the combination of civil and military authority in the person of Colonel Outram should tend in any way to a change of policy in our relations with Arab chiefs. We

think that a mutual good understanding may be best maintained by friendly acts of courtesy, by carefully abstaining from all interference in their feuds, and by strictly declining the office of arbiter, except under very peculiar circumstances. Any other policy might lead to a misconception of our ulterior aims, and occasion much embarrassment.

New times demanded new measures. When we moved up-country, and during my régime as Political Agent of the Hinterland from 1904 to 1907, we found this programme out of date. We had gone up to counsel the Arabs in the art of tactful dealings with their neighbours the Turks. It was the British mind leavening the Arab idiosyncrasies. We acted strictly and without exception through the Arabs. We discarded the *Keddah* system because it was contrary to the Arab genius and to Koranic sanction (Koran, xlix. 13). We took up the rôle of arbiter, and by it we ultimately "scored," when the Great War broke out and the Arabs, though deserted by us, had become thoroughly imbued with British principles, which they dressed up in an Arab disguise.

But Brigadier C—— must have his innings. He was temporarily appointed to Aden to fill the interregnum between Haines and Outram, and wrote to Government asking to be allowed to carry out rigidly and "without partiality the principle of non-intervention whether by sea or land." "I should prefer," he wrote, "that all tribes be left to themselves to fight out their own quarrels, and to have the supplies of the markets thrown open to free competition. The wealth and industry of the Abdalis would give them prominence over more war-like but less industrious neighbours, so that the former would lose little or nothing in the race of competition, while the others might find themselves considerably benefited by the *non-intervention* system, and be gradually weaned from predatory practices and be brought over to more peaceful and useful habits of life. After fifteen years of British occupation we still find ourselves in a state of constant uncertainty as to our supplies."

*Quot homines tot sententiae.* I prefer Haines' policy

*at that time*, for I know what children the Arabs are. They require a strong lead before they can develop on their own lines. In those earliest days of our occupation of Aden the office of arbiter was a necessity, and if the other's policy could ever succeed, it was solely the result of the previous training of Haines which had set them on their own legs. I hold, however, no brief for the *Keddah* system of preference for one man. I would give equal favours to all.

To-day is the day of an *absentee* arbiter. The office of Gallio is not understanded by the Arab peoples.

It is interesting to note the introduction, with the advent of Outram, of the creation of a Resident wielding the dual control of both civil and military functions. From 1864 to 1867 the offices were once again distinct, but shortly afterwards reunited on the ground of economy.

During the division the following incident occurred. The Military Officer one night was bereft of sleep, and the cause of the tragedy was the braying the night long of a disconsolate jackass. In high dudgeon, and when the day dawned, the aggrieved Commander indited a letter of remonstrance to the Political Resident, requesting him to remove the asinine offender from the military cantonment. The reply came immediately, and it was no soothing one: "I have made minute enquiries into the inconvenience you have suffered, and I sympathise fully in your distress, but kindly note that the misdemeanant has been proved to be a *military* jackass!" One may pity the militarist, for "Truly the most disagreeable of voices is the voice of the ass" (Koran xxxi. 18).

The reply of the civilian was the retort courteous. Contrast it with this other story and then I will close. When in 1919 I was a political *détenu* in Bâjil, the Turkish Pasha was there and was interesting himself in my release. He was shorn of his wonted military escorts and was no longer *de facto* Governor-General of the Yemen. When dealing with Arabs it is best to be dressed in a little brief authority. This is because at heart the Arab is a democrat or—socialist! The Pasha lacked

his official garb. There is such a thing as a clothes-philosophy. Society, said Carlyle, is founded upon cloth.

The Pasha, too, lay restless, and the night was long. The place of the ass was taken by the Arab *tabl*, or drum. It plays a good second to the bray of the beast. The Pasha sent a message to the night-revellers, but the music continued. He then despatched his A.D.C.; "Surely they will reverence my minion, and comply." An old woman who was of the party chuckled as she sent back her message: "Tell His Eminence the play cannot but continue, for the occasion is urgent and the night is yet young, but I am praying to Allah, the Merciful One, that He will give to His servant the gift of sleep and oblivion!"

One—a learned one—has said: "I am more afraid of women than of Satan, for God hath said: 'Verily Satan's tricks are impotent' (Koran iv. 78), whilst He has said of women: 'Verily your tricks are mighty'!" (Koran xii. 28).

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### THE "EYE OF THE YEMEN" IN 1923

ADEN calls for a separate volume and I can give but one chapter! The authoress of *Exile* enjoyed the privilege of all novelists, and has drawn a fanciful and lurid picture of life in this settlement which Sir Frederick Treves has described as "an isolated and sunburnt settlement."

Louis Jacolliot, writing to the *Figaro* in 1886, has his own idea of the reason which prompted *Perfide Albion's* grip of this strategic point which commands the Straits of Bab al Mandab. He writes of "le fallacieux prétexte d'y installer un dépôt de charbon; mais en réalité a fin de s'établir fortement sur la côte d'Arabie; d'en éloigner les autres peuples, et de commander l'entrée et la sortie de la mer des Indes." He continues that to know this enterprising, astute, and clever people (ourselves) is to see that they have not lost their time. Masters of an admirable Colonial organisation, "they have fully understood that there was no need to think of conquering these savage peoples, for that would have entailed the maintenance of a very large garrison, and this was impossible by reason of the execrable climate. Therefore they evinced their cleverness by reassuring the native mind, and were solely intent on enhancing their own prestige, leaving time to do the rest. England has learnt how necessary it is to wait, thus affording a timely object-lesson to the impatience of Italy, who would do well to take a leaf from her neighbour's book and turn to profit her own schemes of colonisation." The writer makes an amusing hit at the hosts of British Lords and Dukes, "qui veulent considérer leurs couronnes comtales et ducales, et qui, forcés de donner la richesse à la bourgeoisie commerçante, préparent sans cesse les annexions de l'avenir." Thus, when the chiefs found that England sought no personal aggrandisement, they

lost little by little their distrust, and one after another approached Aden to visit the Governor, who would receive them with regal splendour. Ever since that time England has kept here a Political Agent who has been an invaluable asset to her in this country, and so forth.

Our fault lay in this, that we anticipated the visit of our friends the French! One of our early Political Residents, writing in 1855, said: "The French disavow all intentions of establishing themselves in these seas; nevertheless, it is a fact that their ships of war have examined positions in the Red Sea with remarkable interest, and their visits to Kamaran, and its survey, should not be forgotten. In the event of a war between England and France we should feel the significance of the question raised in the *Report of the State of the French Navy*, wherein an Admiral enquires: 'What would be the consequence if Aden were assailed by an overwhelming force?'" I have given one writer's opinion against another's. Times have changed, and both nations have changed also. Let bygones be bygones! There is ample room for both.

In spite of this our adhesion to the "Eye of the Yemen," it was openly discussed in various English journals in the early eighties that Aden should be abandoned because of its unhealthiness. Its political value was, however, agreed to be immense, and even those who favoured a policy of retreat were forced to admit that regression would argue "British weakness and effeminacy." So a sanatorium was sought, and in 1881 Jabal Dubiyat, a hill 6,000 ft. high, was held to answer every purpose. It is flat-topped except on the eastern side, where stands the tomb of the Wali Hasan, a landmark visible on a clear November day if you put the telescope to your eye in Aden. The camping area is some two square miles, one half of which is under cultivation. It is sixty-five miles from Aden. The hill belongs to a group of Saiyids. The political advantages accruing in the tranquillity of the Hinterland were considered weighty, but the timid policy of the day, repeated in 1907 when we withdrew from Dala, barred our ascent, and the British soldier

was destined to endure on " the sad sea-shores of Aden." I have mentioned in an earlier chapter how Haines was discouraged from planning a sanatorium on Steamer Point, in spite of the strong recommendations of Sir Charles Napier. Haines then wrote to Brigadier Spiller, in command of the troops, and said there was " no objection to officers going to the Somali coast for a change and recreation."

Aden is the Cinderella of the East. The days of its redemption draw nigh if the controlling power can be changed. I do not believe the Colonial Office understands Aden so well as the Indian Government, and Indian traders are so established that they view with distrust Aden's mooted transfer to another office. I think their suspicions are ill-founded, and yet, in spite of India's long connection and superior knowledge, it is not impossible but that a new broom would sweep clean and remove the political cobwebs that obstruct Aden's commercial advancement. The opening of the Suez Canal gave Aden an importance that cannot be over-estimated. In its forts and harbour, and in the country ahint of Aden, there are vast potentialities. A writer has remarked, however, that the stream of commerce between Asia and Western Europe may never again make Aden the centre and entrepôt it was from the days of the Pharaohs to the times of the Rasuli Dynasty, which latter endured from 1232 to 1441 A.D. To sit down and dream will certainly not effect any changes.

Is Aden to be discovered by trippers who spend a few hours ashore to kill time and relieve their *ennui*? I should like to see one of those who are seated comfortably in Downing Street assume the office of a Political Assistant at Aden. His vision would be corrected. He would see things as they are, and not as reported. Perhaps I am too optimistic, for would he not on his return become one of the category of local visionaries—one who had obtained too clear a vision of realities; whose enthusiasm had obscured the wondrous panorama of the " British Empire as a whole "? An eye-specialist is bound to understand far more of the body's organisms than the

MEMORIAL TO THOSE WHO FELL AT THE CAPTURE OF ADEN IN 1839.

THE MA'ALLA WHARF, COUNTRY CRAFT, WITH THE JEWISH CEMETERY AS VIEWED FROM THE MAIN PASS.

eye, and in politics the same argument is applicable, and the local expert is voted a crank.

To the tripper Aden is a sealed book. Entombed in Aden lie the relics of many a young officer of Aden's early history. Take the oldest cemetery in the Crater which abuts just off the main road, and is passed and repassed in taxis by busy trippers, who are all indifferent to the heroes who gave their lives to secure Aden to the Crown. These were the pioneers who made possible such security and prosperity as we see to-day. Yet another monument is situate hard by, and in front of the Quarter-Guard of the British Regiment, and erected to the memory of Aden's captors. All this land of the dead is equally shunned, as are the legends which were intended that he may run who reads them. The " damn-fool " passengers—a name which the Somali drivers have given to the Britons who mouth these vocables—enter a car at the Prince of Wales' Pier, where the bunder-boats disgorge their human freight, and direct the Jehus to travel to the tanks. As they reach the top of the Main Pass they are at times invited to gaze on high, where in a recess of a rock, beetling inaccessible over the old bridle-path into the Crater, termed the *Darb al Hosh*, there rest the reputed remains of the vagabond Cain, the Moslem *Kâbil*, to rhyme with *Hâbil*, or Abel, his brother. The tripper looks and is sceptical. What should he here, when the tombs of his British forbears are passed unviewed! A rapid drive and he comes to the tanks, which, if full—a rare occurrence—hold nine and a half millions of gallons of rainwater, and are ascribed to the Persian occupation, *circa* 575 A.D. This over, a dash perhaps to Sorella's and the purchase of a few silks. The *suk*, or bazar, smells ; the folk look dirty ; and so Aden has been " done." An equally rapid drive back to the Point, and to the bar on the terrace of the Union Club, where a " Perseus " cocktail or a glass of usquebaugh begins to efface the memory of Aden's past, and the grime of flying coal-dust. A return to the ship completes the cure as Aden is left behind them, and Shum Shum's towering peaks wave them good-bye.

These have not seen the soul of Aden. That is illusive as the Pimpernel, and will coyly respond only to the wistful wooer of this "Eye of the Yemen." Is it the curse of Cain? To lay the sprite, I would bring over the bodily remains of Capt. Haines from that desolate corner in the drear Colaba Cemetery and lay them in the land to which he came, saw, and conquered. If the shade of Haines did revisit his old-time haunts he would see more buildings; taxi-cabs running in great and increasing numbers; the sea-water condenser has largely ousted the brackish water-wells; a twelve-hole golf-course calls its votaries to the hard sands of Khor Maksar, some seven miles from the Point; the war-memorial on the landing stage, which suggests a cross between a dissenting-chapel and a mortuary, disfigures the entrance, and lies athwart the gaze seawards of the fisher-saint who sleeps at the foot of the hill across the road.

Sheikh 'Uthman, too, has grown, and at the last census in 1921 numbered 13,000 souls. Ten miles from the Point, this village, thanks to the Great War, has expanded enormously. The old *Sheikh al Dawil*, the original hamlet, where reposes the *Wali*, looks across jealously to the modern town of commercial activity. It is the child of Colonel F. M. Hunter; and the Parsee Registrar, Mr. Muncharji, C.I.E., was the architect. This village, which was at first a sort of "Poneropolis" for Aden's outcasts, is now a budding garden full of vegetable plots and of trees, the abode of various birds. The desert has indeed blossomed like a rose. Jaded Arabs and other merchants of Aden have their gardened houses here, and seek relaxation from the toils of the wharves and the warehouses. Here, too, is the home of the Keith-Falconer Mission, while the founder lies in the seclusion of the cemetery in Holkat Bay, as you pass through the south gate *en route* for the Hill of Marshag, in the Crater. Sheikh 'Uthman is almost clear of the malaria-giving mosquito, thanks to the untiring exertions of Majors Wightwick and Reilly—Political Officers, both of whom still labour in Aden.

All this would astonish Haines, but Aden is still fifty

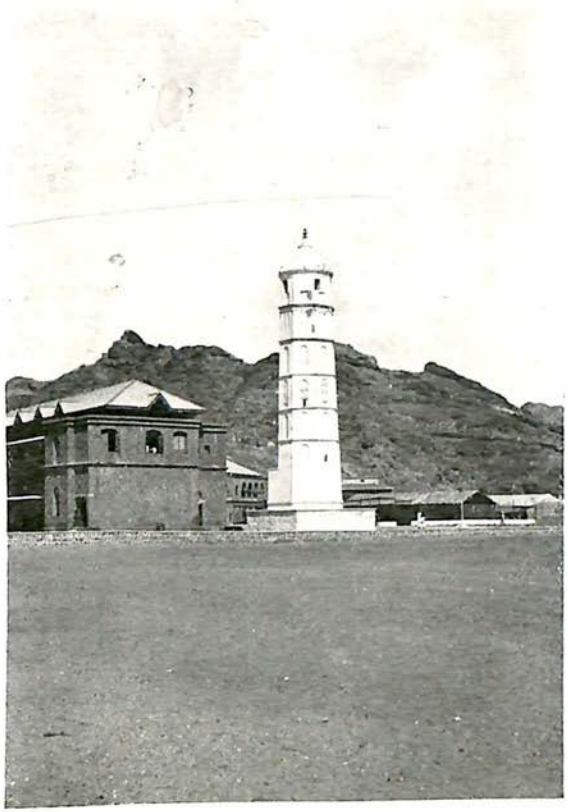
years behind the times. The apathy of Government is visible in this settlement. There is, again, no first-class hotel, and the two principal ones are dirty. The old "Victoria" Hotel, built in honour of our Queen, might be revived. It was the perquisite of Mr. Sorabji Cowasjee, who in 1847 had built it at a cost of more than Rs.20,000. This enterprising Parsee offered Rs.5,000 for the erection of a building for the convenience of married people and the ladies of the Presidency who had to stay a day or two in Aden, and he engaged "to furnish each room with a patent shower-bath and other conveniences so essential to comfort." He would build three rooms with bricks or stone—stone walls—15 ft. by 20 ft. and 13 ft. in height, etc., etc. Aden lacks a tea-shop for the convenience of passengers alighting from the ships. There is no public library. The lately introduced premises of English chemists both at the Point and at the Crater are a pleasing innovation. Trees are almost extinct, though a bush or two is sedulously preserved and well watered on the precincts of the "Jopp Promenade," which was opened with great *éclat* in 1899 by the Resident, General Sir O'Moore Creagh, lately deceased. Here the Jews largely congregate after sunset on Saturdays—all resplendent in their holiday fineries; boys and girls play, and Moslems put up the sunset prayer. There is a bandstand, too, but no band plays. Bands are reserved for the recreation of the members of the Union Club, which adjoins the Promenade, but the strains delight the swarming denizens of the Promenade, who gaze longingly towards the terrace from which their nationality excludes them.

The sanitation of Aden is primitive. Much of the water still drunk is brackish, and conveyed by antediluvian camel carts, and by pipes fed from a well in Sheikh 'Uthman. The lighting is prehistoric, and electricity is but slowly coming into its own. The roads are only moderate and in a state of constant repair. Want of funds is the excuse urged, but the revenues might be largely augmented were the various departments of Aden supervised by a Governor-in-Council, instead

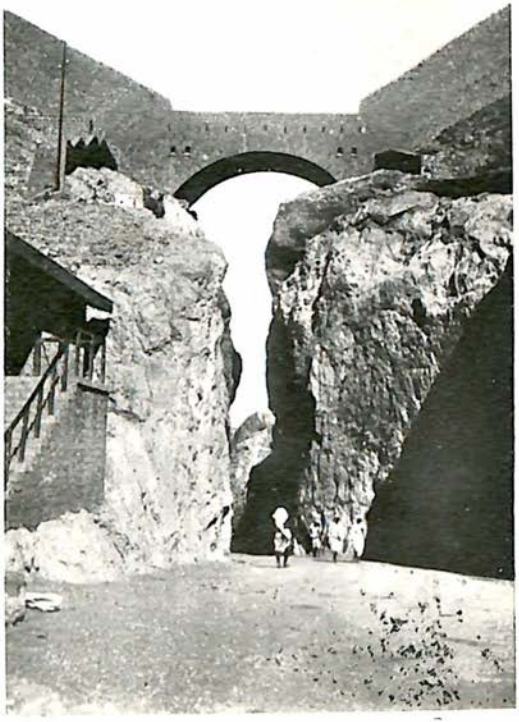
of being, as at present, in the hands of semi-independent officials; and if the revenues already recovered were devoted wholly to the needs of the settlement, and were not sequestered in part to the demands of Imperial needs elsewhere.

Aden's playgrounds have been preserved intact, thanks to the speech of H.M. the King, who visited Aden in 1911. Otherwise the whole of the available sites in the vicinity of the Queen's statue would have been sold for the erection of buildings. The British soldier has his playing-grounds on Steamer Point and in the Crater, but it was necessary to safeguard the interests of the native population, and this His Majesty has effected. There were many who thought the expense of reclaiming these lands from the sea should be recovered *quâ* building sites. They were unable to see that the best return for the moneys expended was the acquisition of these open-air spaces, and that the consequent pleasure and added health of the people was a far greater boon than any financial return could possibly be.

There has been but little system or plan in the erection of buildings. There is scarcely one building in Aden of architectural beauty. An expert once landed and gave us hints, but these have not been carried out. The Ma'alla plain, between the Hejuf Gate and the Crater, is undoubtedly the best site for building expansion, and the present régime is wisely extending the native town in this quarter. Hitherto the old cry of "Aden is a fortress" had baulked all mercantile dreams of progress. The populace of Aden is over 50,000, and expansion is imperative both on the Ma'alla plain and in Sheikh 'Uthman. The present Resident, General Scott, is looking to Khor Maksar as a possible location of a new cantonment, and its removal from the stifling atmosphere of the grim Crater. Haines, writing in 1840, was bent on building a huge Martello Tower on this plain. He planned here officers' quarters, and a long gun, mounted *en barbette* on the tower's summit, would form the northern defence to ensure the safety of the entire plain, which he prophetically added "may in after years prove a valuable



THE MINARET,
the relic of Aden's oldest Mosque.



MAIN PASS GATE, ADEN.

piece of ground." At Khor Maksar to-day are the Headquarters of the Aden Troop, the aftermath of the Irregular Horse started by Haines. Here stands to-day the wireless installation, the quarters of the R.A.F., and the Pack Battery. Here, too, are the golf-links and the polo ground, but there is still ample room for the European cantonment. The air is pure, and one escapes the refraction from the burning rocks of Aden.

It is invidious to pick out the names of those who in latter years have been chiefly instrumental in Aden's improvement, whilst all have been hindered by the slogan of reduced funds ; but I would place on record the labours of Mr. J. B. S. Thubron, C.I.E., the zealous chairman both of the Port Trust and the Aden Settlement—since removed, amid the universal regrets of the Aden taxpayer, to Karachi ; and Mr. Harold Berridge, C.I.E., the indefatigable chief engineer of the port, who has just retired. Through the ministrations of these officers the Ma'alla wharves have been erected—a vast boon to Aden's commerce ; the settlement's resources increased ; while it is due to Mr. Berridge's labours that the harbour has been properly dredged and deepened to conform with the depth of the Suez Canal.

Aden in the old times possessed architectural grandeur in the Crater position. The French traveller La Roque, who visited it in 1708–1710 A.D., speaks of its baths, all lined with marble or jasper, and covered with a handsome dome, having an opening at the top to admit the light, and adorned on the inside with galleries, supported by magnificent pillars. The whole building was conveniently divided into chambers, closets, and other vaulted rooms, which all joined on to the principal hall. In the fourteenth century, however, Ibn Batuta, who calls Aden the *Marsa*, or Harbour of the Yemen, speaks of it as a place without trees, without cultivation, and without water, save for the collection of the rainwater in its tanks. He mentions a pipe-supply from without, but says that the Bedouins interfered with the water, and demanded exorbitant sums in their office as custodians. He mentions Aden's extreme heat, and says it was the

*rendezvous* of Indian vessels trading from Cambay, Coilem, Thana, and Calicut.

The mosques of Aden are numerous, and each has its peculiar history and folk-lore reminiscence. It is by the study of Arab folk-lore and folk-songs that one gets to know the people. Blue-books are prosaic in comparison, and while anyone can prepare a blue-book, the majority of these productions are unread. I would except some of the literature of this nature which proceeds from the Soudan. Tribal usage, tribal proverbs, and the variations of the laws of retaliation amongst the various tribes—these are redolent of Arab life. Aden and the Hinterland abound in such literature, and I have collected some 2,000 local proverbs and a volume of folk-songs which explain the Arab idiosyncrasies. You win your Arab if you can give point to an argument by quoting his local legends. All Aden Political Officers should be made to pass an examination in the lore of the tribesmen. He should be familiar with passages of the Koran, and should have some knowledge of the *Traditions*. It is a baneful practice in Aden to use, as so many do, the Hindustani language. Aden is rapidly becoming indianised. The Post Offices are posted with notices in Hindustani and Gujarati, and Arabic would appear to be a foreign tongue. Many of the school-teachers are Indians. It is the tang of Bombay that is mesmerising Aden. Arab history is not taught in the Government schools. Are we afraid of their studying their national heroes, as in India we tabooed at one period the cult of Shivaji? If Government schools in India taught the youths to revere Shivaji, it would not be necessary for private institutions to start Nationalist schools worked on Indian lines. When Haines captured Aden he mentions many ruined mosques scattered over the plains of the Crater. The principal one was the Jâmi' Mosque of Hydroose ('Aidrûs), the 'Alawi, the Masjid al Jamâl, and the Masjid al Sûk. The first and last only were in actual use. Haines proposed to Government that a large mosque be built at Government's expense, but this plan did not mature. The 'Aidrûs and 'Alawi mosques

are now in general use; the other two named are not traceable. One of the oldest inhabitants of Aden, Ali Bâdir, the chief of the fisher-folk, assured me that on the capture of Aden a huge mosque stood on the sea-front, and I think this must have been the already dilapidated mosque of which the minaret alone stands, a conspicuous feature, next to the Government Treasury. That spot was then on the margin of the sea, for the entire foreshore was later reclaimed, and barracks built as we see them to-day. Abu'l Fida states there was a large Jâmi' Masjid built some time before 718 A.D. by a Caliph of the B. Umayya, and it stood on the seashore. This must be the one mentioned by Ali Bâdir. Another old mosque in Aden is that of Abân, close to the civil jail. The present building is modern, but the original structure is mentioned by El Khazraji as existing in 1286 A.D.

It is curious to see three Hindu temples in the Crater and one Jain place of worship—all a tribute to the impartiality of British rule. The most notable one is that dedicated to the Goddess Amba Bhavani, and is placed very picturesquely under the hill and next to the Arab Guesthouse, which latter Haines once utilised as his winter residence in the Crater. The Arabs call the temple the "Banian Mosque." The other two temples are dedicated, one, in the Daswin Bazar, to Hanuman, and the other, tucked away in the hills opposite the jail, is sacred to Shiva.

How many of the official class in Aden are aware of the huge and old Jewish Cemetery in the neighbourhood of the 'Aidrûs Mosque? To see the walled-in enclosure is to conjure up Aden as it once was. To-day only Jews of note can be interred in the excavations of its stony soil.

Aden place-names are full of interest, but space prevents anything but the briefest mention of them. The P. & O. house and office is styled "Tamsen," after one of the early agents, one Thompson. The Arabs call the premises of the Aden Coal Co. "Barsha," and the only natural interpretation I have heard of this is its corruption from the word "Prussian," and this is probably because

of the Germans that were attached to the firm, which included the agencies of some of the German steamship lines.

The plain of *Ma'alla* is an adaption of the word *mahal*, or quarter—an Arabic word, but used by Indians who gave this area its present Arabic style. This word is meaningless, for there is nothing to indicate the idea of eminence which the word connotes. The Somali quarter on this plain is called Somalipura, another evidence of Indian nomenclature. The place-names of quarters and promontories are all pregnant with Arab folk-lore. In many instances we have given our own names, and the romance is thereby lost.

Another place of interest is the shrine of the Wali Raihân, in Fisherman's Bay. How few there are who have visited this old-time celebrity! Who knows of "Abu Dist," the saint at the foot of Seera, whom the seafaring folk would propitiate by the slaughter of goats before they landed their cargoes? Some few have visited the mummies of the Dugong, in one of the Parsee shops in the Crescent, but they are careless of Aden's real and inner life. This is found only in the Arab quarters.

A mighty fire raged in old Aden in 1386 A.D. and destroyed much of the town. "A fire," says the historian, "descended from the heavens." In the following year a succession of earthquakes shook Aden to its foundations, and the people had recourse to reading of the Koran and Bukhari's Commentaries. This recalls a story of Hodeida in the year 1905 or so. Cholera raged there, and the folk read the Koran day and night, but the plague was not stayed. The scourge was attributed to the immorality of the maidens, and the Turkish remedy was fairly sound. They joined compulsorily in wedlock these erring sisters to members of the Arab *gendarmerie*, but still the malady was not stayed. One wiser than the others then turned his attention to the defects of the sanitary system, and presto! the cholera was scotched!

Is the volcano of Aden extinct? Moslems affirm that before the Last Day the fire that rages in the bowels of the hill of Seera shall once more burst its confines and

consume all living. All things are possible to him that believes!

The water-supply of Aden is crude and primitive. The condenser-supply is said to affect the teeth seriously. This water, however, is pure, and if before the war the plan had matured of bringing in by pipes the water from the Fiyush wells constructed by us near Lahej, Aden might, in the absence of a perfect system of drainage, have become water-logged, and many water-borne diseases have resulted, from which the place is now comparatively free. Again, with the advent of the Turks into our territory the supply would have been cut off completely. The best way is to increase the number of Government condensers, and to supply the whole population with pure water at a nominal price, whatever the loss to Government revenues. The author of the *Tarikh al Mustabsir* tells us that the Persian Sultan Shah bin Janshid tried to bring in water from Zâïda in the Lahej territory, but the distance was too great, and it was he who then constructed the tanks to collect the rainwater. The cement used in their construction was brought from either Zâïda, or from Abyan, in the Fadli Sultan's country. We, too, have latterly advocated a return to the waters of the River Tiban, to be tapped at Zâïda.

During the earlier days of life in Aden, and notably in the régime of General Sir O'Moore Creagh, "gymkhanas" were much in vogue, and the Sultan of Lahej was a frequent and interested visitor. These were held on the Ma'alla plain over a specially prepared course, and all Aden attended. Horse-races were dear to the Prophet, and a tradition records that "After women he loved nothing more than horses." Another tradition says that "Angels are not present at any of the amusements of man, save three, namely, a man coquetting with his wife, the running of horses, and the rivalry of throwing the javèlins." These meetings should be revived. It is a way of improving our relations with the Arab populace.

The political assets in Aden to-day are firstly our disinterested display of justice. To us is the Koranic diction

applicable: "Among the people of the Book are some to one of whom if thou entrust a thousand dinars he will restore them to thee"; and the reverse instance cannot be laid at our door: "And there is of them to whom if thou entrust one dinar, he will not restore it, unless thou be ever instant with him, and this because they say, 'We are not bound to keep faith with the ignorant folk.'"

Another prime asset is the Keith-Falconer Mission, and above all the missionaries stands the name of Dr. John Cameron Young. The influence of this mission is beyond measure. Tribesmen come to Sheikh 'Uthman from every part of the Yemen, from such distant places, too, as the Hijaz and Muscat, and all acclaim their praise of the Scottish healer, although they give Allah the glory, who is the "Causer of Causes"; for, *ma yudâwîk illa man yudwîk*—"None cures thee other than He who afflicts thee." The work of the mission was in abeyance for nearly six years owing to the war and its *sequelæ*. The hospital was reopened in March, 1921, and in the twelve months that followed 569 in-patients were treated; 939 operations performed; 7,920 new patients were given medical attention; and these made 29,563 subsequent visits, thus giving a grand total of 38,991 separate treatments for the year.

Another asset of vital importance at this time, and especially after the war, in which our prestige so suffered, is the Arab battalion—the 1st Yemen Infantry, whose Headquarters are at Sheikh 'Uthman. I have written of the use made by the Italians of their Arab soldiery. We have too long assumed the rôle of a beneficent but far-removed Government. The grant to a Sultan here and there of an occasional gift of arms wherewith to overawe his contumacious tribesmen, and the largesse given to the favoured few who have won their chief's approval, has resulted in the glorification of the few, and the discontent of the many. This is clean contrary to Arab expectation and runs counter to tribal usage, which permits the rule of the one so long only as he conform with the wish of the many who elect him.

The raising in 1918 of the 1st Yemen Infantry has

HINDU TEMPLE DEDICATED TO AMBA BHAVANI IN THE CRATER.

LIEUT.-COL. M. C. LAKE,
commanding the 1st Yemen Infantry

brought us once again in close touch with the interior We took up again the threads we had dropped in 1907. We began to work less obtrusively than during our stay up-country. The pay disbursed to the regiment goes to the many, and for a consideration. There is no suspicion of blackmail. These emoluments go to men living in widely distributed areas, and are widely appreciated.

The Arab soldier is trained to take a pride, not only in himself and in his corps, but in the Government whose salt he eats, for, despite his love of independence, the Arab hankers after a *Daula*, or Government, even if, as one punningly expressed it, a *Daula* is a corporation which disburses *doles*! We Britons have a curious habit of letting others start a novelty and then ourselves following suit haltingly. Every British officer in this regiment, *if carefully selected for his love of the East*, is practically a Political Officer. The numbers, however, of British officers should be limited, for otherwise the Arab officer finds himself of no importance, and the soldier becomes a lifeless automaton. The C.O. must be an absolute Prince, said John Jacob, and the paramount authority so far as the men are concerned. "The only principle of military discipline which a native soldier thoroughly understands is obedience to his C.O. He cannot without great injury to his efficiency be taught to look beyond him." These words should be written in gold, and, if applicable to Indians, how much more so to Arab soldiers. I prefer the use of officers of the British service rather than of the Indian Army, who by their long intimacy with Indians are apt to regard the Arab from the Indian standpoint. Such an officer, however skilled as a soldier, will cut but little ice in an Arab corps. The commingling of B.O.'s with Arabs in their games is of paramount importance. Discipline will revolutionise Arabia, but the relaxation of games will forge the chain that shall bind the Arab yet closer to us. In this respect we are pre-eminently superior to the otherwise admirable Italian officers.

By raising this Yemen Infantry we have at last come

into our own. My scheme of levies, proposed in 1905, and vetoed, has now matured; but it is unwise to holloa unless well clear of the wood. It is bruited that the Colonial Office are proposing to emasculate the corps by wholesale numerical reductions, or to convert them into an attenuated body of Camelry for service in Somaliland. The best fighters amongst them are essentially foot soldiers, and their utility would be impaired. If the men are left where they are, and their numbers are not reduced, but rather enhanced, we should not only retain a moral hold over the country we abandoned in 1907, but we could without risk reduce the numbers of the Indian troops now employed in Aden.

It has been said that the Zeidi element would never fight the Zeidi Imam, if occasion called, and so forth. So say the pessimists. Are we then inferior to the Italians in the leadership of Asiatics? Have we, indeed, any superiors in this line? Did these very Arabs fail the Italians when combating the Moslem Turk? Have Indian troops never deserted in Aden, in France, and other areas? Why all this bleating? Another point of importance is the entire absence of Nationalist ideas which is permeating the Indian Army. There is nothing of this kind in Arabia.

As for the possibility of Zeidi soldiers declining to fight the Zeidi ruler of Sana—a contingency that bad policy alone could create—the idea is chimerical. The Zeidis are, in fact, less fanatical than the Shâfa'is. Both partisans will fight for one who feeds and pays them, and either sect will hurtle the other—yes, will kill their very tribal relations—if they believe in their officers, be these *Kafir* or what not.

Listen once more to John Jacob, that born leader of men: "One active, energetic, right-thinking English gentleman can, even when alone, infuse an excellent spirit into thousands of these Eastern soldiers till they will follow him anywhere, and obey him in all things." Certain croakers, when the Corps was raised, doubted whether Zeidi and Shâfa'i would mingle in one battalion. This doubt was born of Indian experience, and is yet

RAW RECRUITS FOR THE 1ST YEMEN INFANTRY.

THE SAME RECRUITS AFTER THREE WEEKS' TRAINING.

A GROUP OF YOUNG SULTANS AND SHEIKHS WHO AWAIT THE OPENING OF THEIR COLLEGE.

another illustration of the tang of India which threatens to strangle Arabia. In India, the line of cleavage between Sunni and Shi'ite is more clearly defined. In India the two sectaries must worship each in his own proper mosque. With the 1st Yemen Infantry all assemble in one mosque.

Trust the Arab; treat him as one of nature's true gentlemen—for such he is, and his lineage is purer than that of most of the Indian Moslem soldiery—and he will follow you everywhere. Impartial justice and unwearying patience win him over.

If it be said that the Arab soldier cannot be trusted, I would say that the measure of your influence with a man is the belief he has of your belief in him. A copy-book maxim? Apply it and prove its wisdom. Trust this Arab battalion implicitly, or else at once disband it. To do else is to waste both time and money. It recalls the Indian proverb, *Parho to parho, nahin to pinjara khâli karo*—"Sing if you are going to sing, otherwise leave the cage."

The Arab soldier is a cheery fellow, singing as he works. He loves a jest and is a delightful companion. I have found him ever straight and true to his pledged word. It takes but a short time to instil *esprit de corps*. The long-haired mountaineer clad in indigo garments, his turban stuffed with aromatic plants, rapidly passes into the ideal soldier. He is erect and of good carriage, with a pardonable leaning to a rollicking gait as he feels himself a soldier. As the Arabs phrase it, "He puts on the airs of a Nakhoda" (or dhow-master)—*hua yatanakhwad*. His love of the chase, and the agility gained on his hills, where climb the ibex, hasten the military metamorphosis. An up-country Arab Sheikh visiting me at Headquarters was much impressed by the soldierly bearing of these men. "By Allah! What heroes your Government makes of us Arabs!" He eyed as he spoke a man from a village neighbouring his own, one with whom he had a blood-feud.

The present strength of the Yemen Infantry is some 400 men. It is all too small. There are, I believe, 13 Arab officers. The proportion of Zeidis to Shâfa'is is

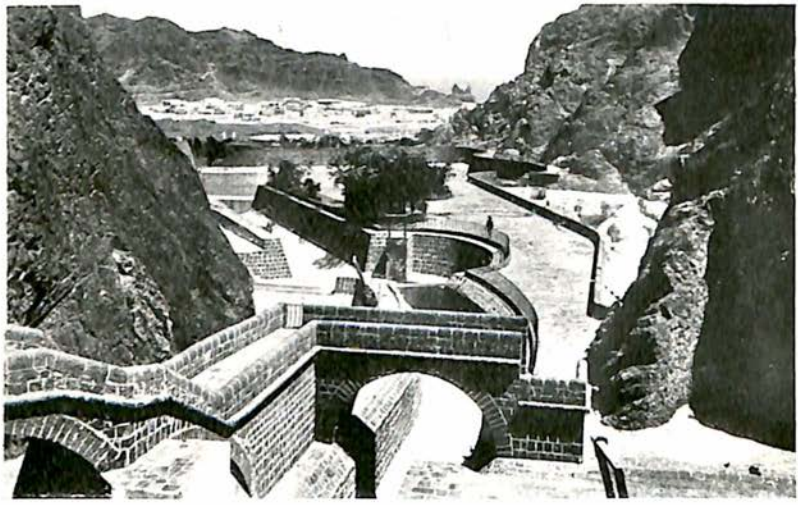
about one to four. I would recommend a larger percentage, for the Zeidis are better soldiers. Some of the best fighting clans have not yet been enlisted. A few of the tribesmen represented could with advantage be eliminated, but, taken as a whole, the selection is admirable, and does infinite credit to Colonel M. C. Lake, who is a born leader of Arabs and a great acquisition. The Arab must fight. The blood-feud calls him. "Fire eats itself if it ever find nothing else to eat," says their proverb. The soldiers of this battalion have a worthy object in view; they can fight, if occasion offers, under the British flag.

It is instructive, and a tribute to our British power of organisation, to recall the words put into the mouth of Sherif Husein of Abu 'Arîsh by Dumas, an author I have here and there quoted. He is discussing the impossibility of disciplining the Arab levies. Discipline, he says, is a thing impossible with such men. They scarcely ever obey the chiefs whom they know from infancy; how, then, will they hearken to those they know not?

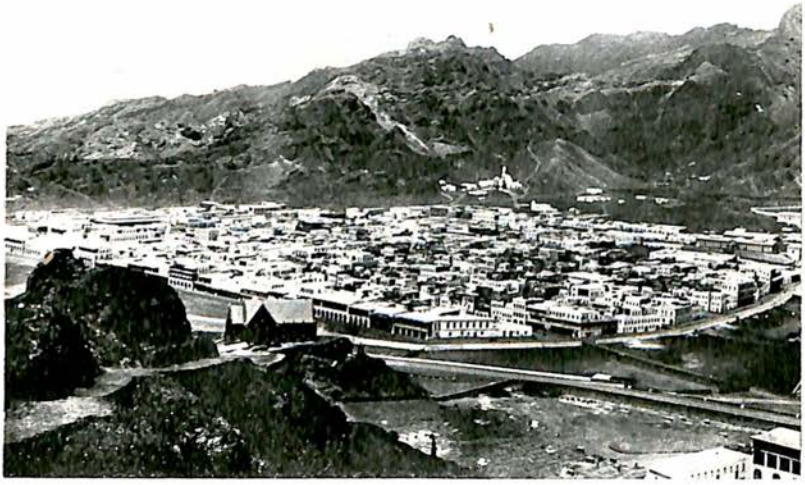
But why, it will be asked, should we encourage this leaven of Britain in the Yemen? I will reply Scotwise by asking if you would prefer the leaven of another European power in our stead. We would see Arabia under the Arabs, each in his proper sphere. It is idle in these days of declining Kingships to transplant Arab rulers out of their proper setting and to place diadems on their brows, which will be secure only so long as we stand by and prop them up. All that is essential is that we who for eighty-three years have been in constant touch with "the Verdant Yemen" should keep it under our ægis, for, as a shrewd American said lately to me, "You English have a way with Asiatics that none other can ever begin to imitate." I felt bound to agree.

The Yemen Infantry is our main political asset to-day. By it we can, with profit both to the Arabs and ourselves, keep in touch with the whole countryside. It is an influence that is subtle, inexpensive, and makes no noise. Hence it is far-reaching.

Other assets we have in the Yemen are the incomparable



FROM THE TANKS, ADEN.



THE TOWN, ADEN.

British soldier, and finally the old-established House of Cowasjee Dinshaw Bros. Ever useful to us, this firm proved a hundredfold so in the Great War. We could not have done without the ready assistance ever offered in ships, of which they possess a fleet of six. When we had to stop the dhow-traffic lest these craft landed enemy goods on the Red Sea littoral, it was C. D. Bros. who took their place, with steamers, and so minimised the surveillance of the Royal Navy patrols. There has been a tendency to deride the monopoly acquired during the long years by this House. The monopoly has been fully earned, and C. D. Bros. was one of the means by which we helped to defeat the Turks in this quarter.

What is wanted in the Yemen is a railway to develop trade, and we require, even more so, a college for the sons of Sultans and Sheikhs. The scheme was mooted in 1905, but nought availed. Latterly, in 1921, the question was revived by General Sir James Stuart, the Resident and G.O.C.

The young Arab grows up in ignorance of everything save the tribal fights, into which he is initiated in his infancy. He plays no games and is addicted to the use of the pernicious *Kat* leaf, which saps his energies. We would catch them young, for the Arab youth has great possibilities. A suitable site for the proposed college may be found on the Khor Maksar plain, where the lads would be removed from the deteriorating influences of the Aden Bazar. To superintend the college we should require an energetic English gentleman with a knowledge of Arabic and proficiency in games, and, above all, one possessed of sympathy and the patience of Job. The subordinate staff can be found in Egypt or Syria. The students might be selected by the Resident, who would nominate some of the boys for a free education, and decide in all cases the reasonable fees. The curriculum would include various games, polo, and a cadet corps, a thorough grounding in the Arab language, and a knowledge of Arab literature and history. The Koran would take a prominent place, and the course should include elementary mathematics and a working knowledge of

the English language. Certain promising students might be taught the principles of agriculture, for the Arabs move in ruts and are content to follow in the path of their forefathers. The political advantage derivable from such an institution would fully justify an outlay of Imperial funds both to inaugurate and to maintain the college. This is an intensive, rather than an extensive, policy within our Protectorate.

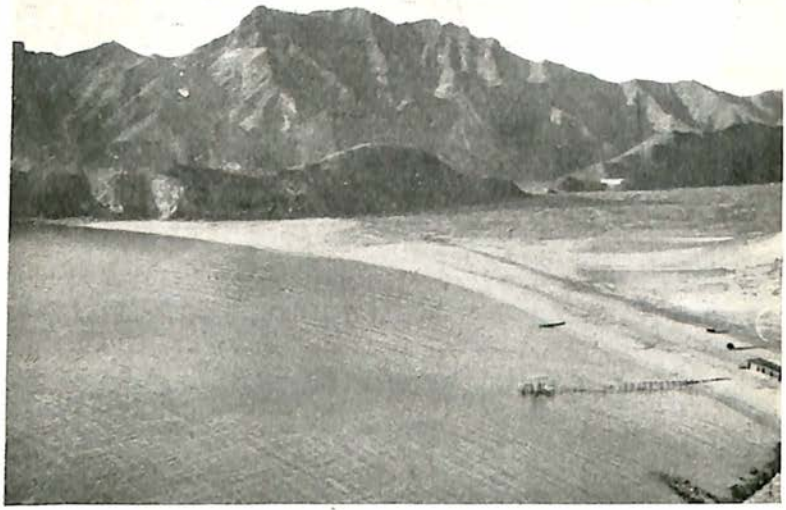
With regard to Aden's youth, a pressing need is the creation of Boy Scouts. With both Arab and Somali boys the movement would be extremely popular. At present boys in Aden run to seed. Their sole diversion is gambling in the coffee-houses. Mr. Berridge was instrumental in starting a carpenter's shop for them. This institution requires careful fostering by the authorities.

To sum up. The Arab battalion, the Arab college, and the medical mission bind us by a triple chord to the hearts of the Arab peoples. No need with such institutions to look to the hills beyond, for here in Aden the strength of the hills is ours also! *Il faut cultiver son jardin.*

There remains the matter of trade. It is private enterprise that is the driving force to make the wheels revolve. The Yemen yearns to trade in spite of the tradition: "Not a plough will enter the habitation of a people without debasing them." Not so reasoned Sandeman in Beluchistan.

In Arabia we have the military party, and there is the trading community, whom in Dala the tribesmen call *mukartasin*, or "The wrappers-up-of-commodities-in-paper."

The author of *L'Arabie Heureuse* was aggrieved at England's place in the Yemen, and wrote that "Arab commerce is nearly destroyed in Aden, and the one thing which gives life and movement is the call in the port of the Indian mail! Commerce is almost entirely in English and Indian hands." Dumas' statement was prejudiced and untrue. Trade has revived with our tenure, but scarcely a fringe of the commodities available has been



HUKAT BAY. CRATER.
"The sad sea-shores of Aden."

PICTURESQUE VIEW OF STEAMER POINT.

touched. The output of coffee is small in comparison with what it might be. Skins and hides abound. The Turkish occupation did not encourage the full volume of trade. The Turks derived enough to carry on their administration. They feared the rise to prosperity of the Arab nation which a brisk trade would ensure. Had the Turks remained longer in the country, and especially now after the war, I believe they would have risen to the necessity of a development of its natural resources. The mines are untouched. Iron, copper, coal, gold, and silver are said to exist. Rock-salt is found in several places. Cotton could be cultivated, and tobacco growth has a promising future. The salt-pans of Aden might be profitably extended and our revenues enhanced. Horace sang of the " unrifled treasures of the Arabs," and Propertius speaks of the " Red Sea gems."

The Turks knew of the mineral deposits, and by proclamation in 1880 the Government at Sana offered $5,000 for information leading to the discovery of gold, $3,500 for silver openings, and $600 for coal, but the wily Arab lay low.

I am no advocate of the foreign syndicate exploiting the country. I believe, however, in private and British enterprise provided our pioneers work through Arab agency. The country's development lies safely in Arab hands, and must not be unduly forced. Both the Imam of Sana and the ruler of Sabia in 'Asîr are more than ready to develop their resources now that the Turks have gone. All that is required is sympathy with Arab aspirations and the patience that does not ask for an immediate return on outlay.

There is much to be said for the tradition : " Wisdom belongs to the Yemen ; the foundation of all things is here ; all things great have their origin in the Yemen, and the issue shall endure with the duration of its star."

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### THE ISLE OF SOKOTRA AND THE ANCIENT LAND OF HAZARMAVETH

THE Isle of Sokotra is situated in the Indian Ocean, Lat. 12° 30′ N. and Long. 54° E. It lies some 130 miles to E.N.E. of Cape Guardafui, and 190 miles to the S.E. of the Arabian mainland. It is the possession of the Mahri Sultan of Kishn, whose territory on the mainland may be roughly comprised between Long. 51° and 53°. The island is seventy-two miles in length by twenty-two miles in breadth, and contains an area of 2,000 to 3,000 square miles. The capital is Tamarida, at Long. 54°. and called so, probably by the Portuguese, because of its abounding palm trees. The Sokotrans term it Hadibu. The old capital was Shikk (Sokotran) or Sûk (Arabic), and its ruins are still seen a little to the east of Hadibu. Other places of note are Kalansia, on the extreme west, and Kâdhûb, to Hadibu's immediate west. The *massif* of Jabal Hajar rises to an altitude of nearly 5,000 ft., and is of feldspathic granite. The plateau generally is a limestone formation.' Sokotra was at one time a part of the mainland. The inhabitants number some 10,000 to 12,000. On the coast these folk are of mixed Arab, Indian, African, and Portuguese descent, and they live mainly by fishing. They prefer barter to cash transactions. In the mountains are found the true aborigines. These are light-skinned, tall, and robust, with thin lips, straight noses, and straight black hair. The dialects of Sokotra and of Mahra, on the mainland, are akin to old Sabæan and Minæan. The dialects, however, are distinct, and Sokotran is perhaps the older of the two. Hadibu, the capital, is a village of 400 inhabitants, and stands on the northern coast at the head of an open bay and in a semi-insular plain enclosed by the spurs of Jabal Hajar. A dense grove of date-palms

surrounds the village. It is a delightfully secluded and picturesque spot. I would love to pass here the rest of my life. The Prophet is said to have been enchanted by three things—greenery, water, and a lovely face. Sokotra can answer for the first two items, and, if we are to believe my Sokotran guide, there exist above the eastern promontory of Ras Mûmeh—for the charted name of Ras Radrasa is unknown to the islanders—women so radiant that you must avert your eye. Many a ship has been wrecked on Ras Mûmeh, and doubtless it is the call from that bluff headland of the fair Syrens who people the spot.

It is said that Alexander the Great put a Greek colony in Sokotra, and it is possibly the Greek blood flowing in the veins of their descendants that has given the women of this eastern hill-top their charm. Alas, I never met them!

The author of the *Periplus* has some very interesting remarks to make on the origin of Sokotra's name. The island has had long connection with Indian corsairs. The name appears to be derived from the Sanskrit *Dvipa Sukhâdhâra*, or the Isle of the Abode of Bliss, which the Arabs may have corrupted into *Suk Katra*—"The market of the exudations" of the dragon's-blood tree (*Dracaena cinnabari*), which was at one time the chief product of the island. Sokotra is believed to be the *Pa-anch* of the Egyptians, and the "Panchaia" of Virgil's second *Georgic*, line 139: *Totaque turiferis Panchaia pinquis arenis.*

Pliny gives the story of the Phœnix, the sacred bird of the old Phœnicians, and this bird was connected with Panchaia. It was sacred to the sun. When it becomes old it builds its nest of cinnamon and the sprigs of incense, which it fills with perfumes, and there lays its body down to die. From its bones and marrow there springs a small worm, which is metamorphosed into a little bird. This bird performs the obsequies of its predecessor, and carries the nest entire to the City of the Sun, near Panchaia, and there deposits it upon the altar of that divinity. The revolution of the year is completed with the life of this

bird. Cf. Job xxix. 18: "I shall die in my nest and multiply my days as the sand." The cinnabar, or dragon's-blood, is connected with the combat with a dragon or serpent, for the possession of a sacred place. Such stories are current in all Mediterranean countries. It is so related of Apollo at Delphi, and of Adônis in Syria, and is the origin of the modern faith of St. George and the Dragon. In all these legends held by Semitic people, or borrowed from them, the contender is a hero or a god, and in Sokotra, say some, it is an elephant.

The origin of the struggle may date back to India, where the Hindu Triad is Brahmâ, Vishnu, and Shiva, the Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer respectively. They were worshipped at a shrine on an island in Bombay harbour still called *Elephanta*, and this island was in constant touch with the Gulf of Aden. An elephant's head was the visible emblem of the sacred syllable *AUM*, which represents the Triad. The elephant stood for Brahmâ or Vishnu, while the dragon, or cobra, represented Shiva, the Destroyer, and these constant combats between an elephant and a dragon, the blood from which was called the "blood of the two brothers," is a symbol of the perpetual conflict between the persons of the Hindu Triad. Tod, in his *Rajasthan*, makes this pregnant remark: The Camari tribe, one of the sun-worshippers of Saurashtra, claim descent from the bird-god of Vishnu—who helped Rama to the discovery of his Sita—and the *macara*, or crocodile, and date the monstrous inception from that event. Their original abode was *Sancodra Bet* or Island of Sancodra. "Whether to the Dioscorides at the entrance of the Arabian Gulf this name was given (evidently corrupted from Sank-ha-dwara to Socotra) we shall not stop to enquire. Like the isle in the entrance of the Gulf of Cutch, it is the *dwara*, or portal, to the *Sinus Arabicus*, and the pearl-shell (*sankha*) there abounds. This tribe deduce their origin from Rama's expedition, and allege that their ichthyopic mother landed them where they still reside." It is curious, says Tod, that the designation of the tribe Camar is a transposition of Macar (crocodile, or perhaps a cognate dragon).

The traveller Bent rightly says that the dragon's-blood tree is still called by Arabs the "blood of the two brothers," or, *Dam al Akhwain*. The story is of surpassing interest.

I have an ancillary theory. The Roman name for the island was Dioscoridis Insula, and the Dioscuri were Castor and Pollux, the twin sons of Jupiter and Leda. Hence the Arab designation of the tree. Horace tells of these twin brothers of Helen. They would guide ships in distress, and were the mighty helpers of man—Dioscuri, or, in the Greek, Θεοὶ σωτῆρες.

The author of *Lalla Rookh* is perhaps referring to islands other than Sokotra when he says:

> I know where the Isles of Perfume are,
> Many a fathom down in the sea,
> To the south of sun-bright Araby.

He is building on the authority of Diodorus, who, while placing the Isles of Perfume to the south of Arabia Felix, says the islands have disappeared. They have sunk, says Grandpré, in his *Voyage to the Indian Ocean*, into an abyss made by a fire beneath their foundations.

Classical geography tells us that there was on the island of Panchaia a temple dedicated to Jupiter Triphylius, who got his name from the mountain Triphylia, which I would wish to identify with the present-day Jabal Hajar of Sokotra. It is very important to have an ethnographical survey of Sokotra. Many have been there to classify the fauna and flora, but it is the other branch of study that promises the most interesting results. I had planned such a survey just before the war, but, as an Indian once remarked to me of Aden: "This is a curious place, sir, for there is never any progress." The Resident in Aden had always an R.I.M. ship at his disposal, but what really practical or useful has ever been achieved? Surely I am justified in saying that, had any other nation been the masters of Aden, some more tangible result of our stay would have been shown? Aden is the land of the lotus-eaters. Lord Morley it was, I believe, who talked of its "sun-baked officials,"

and he was right! Give Aden a full-time and active Political Resident and the place would be revolutionised. The political-military combination is more than one mortal man can oversee, and if the reader will forgive the pun, it is the overseas portion of our Protectorate that has been so long and so systematically neglected.

I have mentioned Alexander's colony in Sokotra, but Dr. George Finlay in his *Greece under the Romans* tells us that in the days of Constantine the Greeks traded with Arabia, and a Greek colony had been established, in the time of the Ptolemies, in Sokotra (Dioscorides) as a station for the India trade. This colony, mixed with a number of Syrians, still continued in spite of the troubles raised by the Saracens on the northern shores of the Red Sea. It is said that the people of Sokotra spoke Syriac in the middle of the fourth century, and Greek when visited in the sixth century by Cosmos. The Sokotran Christians seem to have been Nestorians. In the Middle Ages the island was said to hold some 10,000 warriors. To-day, and when visited by me in 1911 and thereafter, the people appeared to be extremely docile and domestic. A Sultan of the Kishn family who was with me believed that any ten armed men could easily seize and hold the island. I visited Shikk, the old capital, and, concealed behind palm trees, I awaited with a camera the exit, from the house before me, of women who should parley with my wife and give me the opportunity of a snapshot. The women, however, were coy, and no results were obtained. The ladies of Shikk proved very voluble to one of their own sex and exceedingly inquisitive. They asked my wife if she were the travelling wife, or just the mother of children at home. I was expected to possess two! Learning that we had a boy of three years in Aden, these accommodating females produced an infant aged eighteen months and asked my wife to take her away, for, perchance, when he grew up, our son might like to take her to wife, with such others as he might select elsewhere, and it was good to blend the Sokotran breed with another strain!

Montaigne mentions the island of *Zocotora*, and says

the Bishop Osorius wrote that at the other end of the world is an isle called by the Ancients Dioscorides, which was abundantly fertile in all sorts of trees and fruits and of an exceedingly beautiful air. The inhabitants are Christian, and have churches and altars adorned with crosses, but without images. They were great observers of fasts and feasts and so chaste that none were permitted to have to do with more than one woman. So content were they with their condition that, environed with the sea, they knew nothing of navigation, and so simple, that they understood not a syllable of the religion they professed. Marco Polo found churches there. Tristão da Cunha and Albuquerque seized it in 1507 A.D. The former built a fort at *Soco* (Shikk), which he dismantled in 1511. In the middle of the seventeenth century Vincenzo said the people were styled Christians, but had a mixture of Jewish, Christian, and Pagan rites. The women were all called "Maria." The ruins of a church were discovered in 1911 by Mr. Berridge, who accompanied me to the island.

I have mentioned in chapter ii. the presence for a time in Sokotra of British troops, and their removal in 1835. When, twelve years later, in 1847, Lieut. Cruttenden visited the island, he found it almost depopulated, and Tamarida was a vast graveyard with not more than twenty Arab residents, for the fever that had been so great a scourge to the European detachment was rife amongst them. For three years the rain had failed and their flocks had died, and the folk fed off small shell-fish, and the supplies from buggaloes that sheltered in the S.W. monsoon, when the wind called *Kos* was blowing. Cruttenden adds that "they all have very grateful recollections of the behaviour of the English troops stationed there under Captains Bailey and Corsellis, and, naturally enough, wish them back again." Good old Tommy Atkins! It is ever the same. Wherever he goes he popularises our reputation for just dealing; and yet, in 1907, when he recalled us from Dala, Lord Morley hinted that our presence was distasteful to the Arabs, and spelled interference! Three years before Cruttenden's

arrival Tamarida had been visited by severe earthquakes, and the damage done was everywhere visible.

Sokotra's aloes were once world-famed. In the Indian book of *Kalila and Dimna* it is said of the lion that in his early friendship he is as a mouthful of honey, sweet for awhile to the palate, but in the end it is more bitter than aloes of Sokotra. Present-day exports are *ghi*, millet, cotton, tobacco. Frankincense is nowadays obtained of better quality elsewhere. The "blood of the two brothers" has practically ceased to flow. The ass of the island is a real beauty, and the Sokotran cow will rival an Alderney. There are no dogs on the island. Others besides myself have made a short vocabulary of the Sokotran dialect. I give just a few specimens. The words for the devil are *Misgid*, *Matfukh*, and *Di'dih*; the dragon's-blood tree is *Idha* and *Aryat dakka*; a cow is *Illih*; a horse *Ka'ar*; a man *'Âj*; a woman *'Âshih*; water is *Rîmau*; a boy *Muksham*; a girl *Kirhim*; fire (which is produced by rubbing together two sticks, for matches are a novelty) is *Shiyât*; and a dhow they call *Sadak*.

An officer of a Russian warship which visited Sokotra in the war, during its passage to Aden, told me the simple natives accepted a bottle of brandy! An Arab camelman was once bitten by a camel and in great pain. I poured out a stiff glass of brandy. Smelling it, he enquired if it were *Khamr*, or an intoxicant, and I replied it was good medicine. He lapped it up with gusto. He knew what it was, but as I had not labelled it brandy his conscience was not suffered to prick him!

Sokotrans are famed for sorcery, said one of the Sultan's family to me at Sokotra, and he told this story: If a Sokotran woman falls in love and would go to her lover, she can change herself into a bird, and afterwards will fly home and resume her human shape. If the man refuse her love, she can change him into a goat, dog, or other animal. Once upon a time there was a man of Sokotra married to a lady of Kishn. The man decamped to Sokotra and stayed away for seven years. The woman craved her husband, but destiny interposed between her and her longing. The women of Kishn, during the first

ten days of the month Muharram, are wont to visit the seashore, where after a nightly bath and a dance they return to their couches. The desolate wife told her plaint to some of these ladies, who advised her to stay the next night on the shore after the others had gone home, when she would find a "monstrous mammal," which she should at once bestride. At the critical moment the woman shied off through fear and retired to her house. Her friend next morning rebuked her fear, telling her that as night again came on she would find there a large bird. She did so, and the bird arrived as per programme. Mounting its back, the woman flew across to Sokotra, and spent the time with her husband. She told him of her means of conveyance, and then returned to the shore where the bird awaited her, but refused its aid till she had bathed and was clean. She bathed and was then duly carried back to Kishn, none knowing of her adventure, save her husband, herself, and the bird. Before parting from her husband she told him she should now probably conceive, and to prove her fidelity to him, and to preclude the idle tongue of slander, she suggested the handing over of his ring and *jambiya*, or dagger. These he gave her, and made precise notes of the interview. When four months had passed she became assured of a human futurity. She produced forthwith the two tokens and her husband's note, and so satisfied the curiosity of her people. Is the bird not the Phœnix of the Phœnicians?

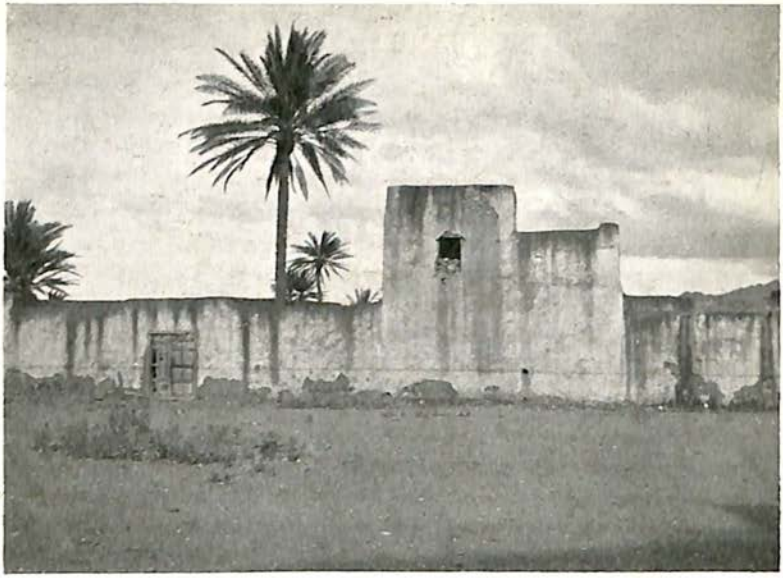
Witches in Sokotra are like to the sand on the seashore —innumerable. A Sokotran told me the following: A witch will take a man to a deserted spot, slaughter him, and then eat of his cooked flesh. Another witch, if called in to interfere, can restore the victim as he was before, but his lease of life is then short, and he soon dies. If a witch is accused to the Sultan of such malpractice, he orders both her hands to be bound to her sides; her feet and legs are weighted with stones; and she is cast into the sea. If she sink deep, but shortly reappear, she is adjudged innocent and is released; but if she remain floating on the surface of the water her guilt is proven,

and two men are sent in to fetch her out, when she is removed and executed.

Again, if a man is enchanted by a woman the local doctor can at once diagnose his case. He accompanies the bewitched male to the house of the witch and he threatens her with dire punishment unless she undo her charm. This she quickly will do! Several of these doctors can forecast the unseen. My informant said that if he, for example, were in Aden, and his family in their anxiety would discover how he was faring, the doctor could tell them just where he was, and what he was doing. The *modus operandi* is as follows: The doctor would fill a large bowl with water and gaze intently therein, and the water would reveal visibly the exact locality of the absentee. This is our own crystal-gazing. It is believed that to such doctors are attached a number of giants, by whose aid they can function. The doctor on seeing a sick man can tell at once if he will recover or die. He is confronted by the problem, so discussed with us to-day, as to whether the doctor should tell! I fancy as a Moslem he will rather put the onus on Allah and exclaim, *Insha Allah* and *Allah ya'lam*, or "God knows."

If ever the people suffer from drought they will kill and devour camels their owners have allowed to stray. In such cases the slayers will resort to the Germanic principle of *spurlos versenkt*, and try to conceal all trace of their crime. If, however, the criminal is accused of such act, he must be put through his paces by the following ordeal: An iron bar made red-hot is placed on his outstretched tongue. If he flinches or struggles, or cries, he is proved guilty, and his right arm is amputated. His property, if he have any, is sold against the cost of the stolen animal. If the heated iron have no effect on him, he is set at large. This is the practice of *bisha'a*, and is common in many of the Sultanic Courts of the Yemen.

If one is charged with debt, he is brought before the Sultan. If he admit the charge but decline to pay, his house or palm trees are sold; but if he have no property, he is put in jail at the creditor's expense till such time as the latter may agree to release him. If we go back



House of a Sokotran Notable.

Group of Sokotrans.

to Aden's early history, we have done this ourselves. Here the officer did offer to be mulcted of his pension, but the offer was scouted!

If a Sokotran be committed for assault, he is punished by the like injuries he has afflicted. This is Koranic, and, as far as the local sanction of the island will allow, the Koran is the criminal and civil code applied.

Many of these local occurrences are passing strange. I gave credence to them all. All things are possible to him that believeth. One of the charms of the East is the easy accommodation of the mind to the realities of the "Kenspeckle" world of spirit lying about us. Often have I wished I could, for one day even, enter the Eastern's skin and see through his eyes. Is it not possible I should then not care to return to my former state? *Al 'akâid fawâid*, they say—"Faith carries its own reward." We discount the deity, deferring to the abstractions of providence or goodness. These simpler folk see Allah everywhere, and they sense, besides, His messengers, believing with the Book that "each hath a succession of angels before him and behind, who watch over him by Allah's behest."

. . . . . .

I now pass to a brief sketch of Hadramaut, the Hazarmaveth of Gen. x. 26. He was the offspring of Joktan, the Arabian Kahtan.

Others have written of the social and tribal life in this province, notably C. Van Den Berg, whose brochure has been translated into English by Major Sealy, a former Political Assistant in Aden. In recent years Capt. W. Lee-Warner visited this Hinterland in 1919 and Capt. Nasiruddin Ahmed followed in 1920. The latter, being a Moslem, enjoyed special privileges. M. Van Den Berg would locate the Hadramaut between the longitude of 48° and 51° 10′ E.; that is, from the confines of the *'Ain al Ma'bad* of the Wahidi Sultan, and *Saihut*, of the Mahri ruler of Kishn and Sokotra. He includes its Hinterland with the thickly-populated tracts of Shibâm, *Tharîm*, Siyun, Al Ghurfa, Maryama, Tarîs, Bor, and Târiba.

Shibâm is the capital of the interior and is exceedingly prosperous. Its merchants are fanatical in their dislike of foreigners. Tharîm and Siyûn are the Headquarters of the Kathiri Sultans, with whom the late Sultan Sir Ghalib bin 'Awad in 1918, through the instrumentality of his powerful Wazir, Khan Bahadur Saiyid Husein bin Hâmid al Mihdar, made an agreement. The main object was to isolate the truculent Humumi tribesmen, with whom Sir Ghalib had been for years at variance.

The ancient capital of the *Chatramotitæ* in Hadramaut was Sabbatha. There are salt-mines in the vicinity. It lies in the Wadi Rakhiya, above Wadi Hadramaut, and is about sixty miles west of the present capital Shibâm. Sabbatha is the Sabota of Pliny, with "sixty temples within its walls." This Hinterland borders on the *Rub 'a al Khâli*, to the north.

There is a very close commercial *nexus* between this upper Hadramaut and Java with Sumatra, and Capt. Lee-Warner was able to pick his way in this country by his masterly grip of the Malay tongue.

The Sultan of Shihr and Makalla, before his treaty with the Kathiri, had placed a ban on the free entry into his country of the folk from the Netherland's East Indies, and the Dutch Colonial Government had expressed its resolve to carry out the counter-threat of forbidding the immigration from the Hadramaut. As almost the entire wealth of the Hadramaut comes from this outside connection, it may readily be imagined what a blow would thereby have been struck at commercial enterprise between the two countries. Such a contingency Sir Ghalib was able, through the sagacity of his Wazir, to defeat. All I have feared was that the treaty concluded was based on no permanent foundation. The Kathiri Sultans have ever chafed at their exclusion from the sea. Their immediate subjects, over whom our friend the Ku'aiti Sultan had only superficially suzerain rights, were opulent, and keenly desirous of progress, at a pace too rapid for the Lord of Shihr and Makalla, who was an Arab of Yâfa'i descent and a firm believer in the advantages of moving on strictly conservative lines. He was

like the chameleon, who will not release its hold on the bough behind till its hands have firmly grasped the bough in front, and its next position is felt to be secure.

The Saiyids of the Hadramaut are all powerful, and have strong commercial instincts, especially they of Al 'Ainât, who are descended from the House of Ahl Sheikh Bubakr Sâlim bin Ahmed. The Aden folk will punningly say of the Hadrami merchant class that he is more cowardly than a woman—*Al Hadârim adhallu min al harîm.* He cannot stay at home, but is a restless vagabond. A Moslem of Cutch once told me that this propensity was foretold in the Koran, and he quoted Sura xi. 63—" Followed were they in this world by a curse." This relates to the men of old 'Âd, but judging by the worldly prosperity of these Hadrami Saiyid-merchants, and those of Aden in particular, I do not think my Cutchi friend scored a bull's-eye when he launched his *Parthian* shot at the community.

An influential Saiyid of the Hadramaut, an adviser of the Kathiri Sultans, called on me in January, 1914, on his way back to Tharîm from Bombay. He naturally thought little of the Ku'aiti Sultan, and was loud in his praise of the Kathiri Sultan Mansur bin Ghalib of Siyûn, whose army was composed of 700 Sidis and 30,000 tribesmen. This was Semitic exaggeration, and one has to divide the number by five and then take the square-root of the quotient to arrive at a basic fact. The Saiyid told me his Sultan was proposing an alliance with a foreign power or with the Imam of Sana, for the Kathiri had lain too long neglected, and they craved a sea-port to develop their growing trade. He put out a " feeler," and suggested that, if we made the advance, the Kathiri would probably prefer our Government. I asked if the Kathiri sought British protection, but he at once objected to the phrase used as likely to offend the bigots of Hadramaut. What, said he, do you mean by a Protectorate? I explained the position, and said it meant that we would not allow any foreign interference in the country. My friend replied that all we might reasonably expect was the stipulation not to cede, lease,

or mortgage their territories except with Britain's permission, and that that was practically the same thing as protection, but was couched in more diplomatic terms. He himself did not want our interference in Arab affairs, and asked whether, if the Kathiris attacked Shihr and Makalla, the Aden Government would remain strictly neutral. He feared we should rather assist our friend the Ku'aiti. To this I made no reply, and he got his answer. The Saiyid derided the Ku'aiti's claim to suzerainty, saying that if Sir Ghalib beat his drum—*idha dakk marfa'hu*—a few individuals, of the Al Humum tribesmen only, would muster to his call; whereas if the Kathiri called a muster—*istasrakhahum*—hordes of armed men would at once assemble. He said that the Hadramaut was Shâfa'i to a man, and would never countenance the Zeidi Imam: that Zeidis were *mubtada*, or innovators, and were as opposed to Shawâfi' as were Protestants to Catholics (*sic*). He evinced his anxiety by suggesting I should wire to Government to conclude a treaty, but he reminded me that the matter demanded money, as all the tribesmen would ask largesse. He then again referred to the expression of "protection," and insisted that the wearers of the "large turbans"—*'imâmât kubâr*—would resent the idea, but the promise to "ward off" the Kathiri's enemies—*difa' 'an*—would preclude all chance of panic.

The Saiyid advocated that his Sultan Mansur and the British should come to immediate terms, independently of the Ku'aiti Sultan, so that the benefit accruing to the Kathiris might be real and permanent. We should tell the Âl 'Awad bin Umar (the Ku'aiti House) that the watchword for Hadramaut was independence, and an equal security for all.

The Headquarters of the Al Humum tribe is at Ghail bin Yumein, in the hills, and these turbulent tribesmen trace their descent to the Kathiri House. It is true that the Ku'aiti House is of a comparatively recent date. Coming originally from the Khulâki tribesmen of Yâfa', the Âl 'Awad have amassed their wealth during their service with the Nizam of Hyderabad (Deccan).

HADIBU, THE CAPITAL OF SOKOTRA, WITH J. HAGAR.

THE LAGOON AND PALMS OF HADIBU.

We have never admitted the validity nor the existence of the Sultan's absolute rule over the country within, but, since it is best for us to steer clear of all intervention in local politics, it is manifestly politic to welcome the recent treaty, and to hope for the extension of the rule of a single strong ruler; and such the Ku'aiti, thanks to his vigilant Wazir, is surely becoming, and is consolidating his rule. It is wise at this stage to disregard the well-known proclivity of the Arab peoples towards independence and the water-tight compartments of divided rule. Makalla is too far from Aden for the active exercise there of our influence. Sir Ghalib in his lifetime, and now his successor, are fully alive to the demands of the changed times and so long as the country is opened to trade, and is unfettered by the earlier and vexatious restrictions imposed at Makalla, all will go well. The future of Hadramaut lies beyond its geographical boundaries; it lies in Singapore, in Java, and beyond the seas. Yâfa'is, too, do a large business in Java, and return to spend at home the affluence gained.

In 1916 there was started within Hadramaut a society styling itself the *Jama'îyat al Hakk*, and its printed programme was broadcasted throughout the interior. Its genesis was probably in Java, but the promoters were men of Hadramaut, and of Kathiri race. Its aims were to secure justice to all parties, and a close adherence to the dictates of the Moslem Shari'a; to aid the poor and the oppressed; to supervise all political and military matters, so that there might be growth and progress with easy communications. The Kathiri Sultans were approached and promised their adherence. The Headquarters of the society were to be either at Tharîm or Siyûn, where the Sultans live, and branches were to be extended throughout Hadramaut, in Singapore, Java, in Aden; and all were to be affiliated to the main body. The President was to be selected from the Kathiri House. In short, it was a republican movement, and aimed at the independence of a Hadramaut *bloc*. In many ways the ideas were excellent inasmuch as the reforms were from within. The only drawback was the society's covert

campaign against our established Protégé, the Ku'aiti Sultan, as staunch a believer in the British ideal as ever sat on an Arab throne. Fortunately, perhaps, the society suddenly dissolved owing to internal dissensions, and the clock of Arab advancement was put back indefinitely. The country was hardly ready for such a political evolution. That will be the next development, I feel sure, but till such time I believe the one-man rule is the panacea for the recovery of the country that is distracted by divided interests which the existence of small principalities serves only to foster. I believe the time will come when it will be best to cut the all-British connection. It will suffice if the country look to Great Britain as its adviser and exemplar. There is no need to paint the map red. A new Arabia is slowly evolving and will shortly come into its own, if we decline to interfere. "Without going out of doors" we may win over the whole Arab world.

It is the Saiyids after all who really rule in Hadramaut, and administer to the needs of their votaries, who are technically styled *Akhdâm* (or servants). Theirs is a theocracy which appeals to these exclusive people. No country is more priest-ridden. The learned M. Snouck Hargronje has described the province as "sans gouvernement regulier, sans ordre, ni unité, et sans prosperité," but my people will have it so; and yet I believe the Hadramaut will prosper in its set time. Pessimism never achieved results. There is promise in the pride of the *Kabâil*, who prefer, as William Harrison has said, "the old smell of ancient race." With a craven race alone is despair justified.

Some would enlarge the scope of the Hadramaut to include the entire coast-line from east of Aden to the limit of Aden's sphere, terminating at Long. 53° 40′ E., and in this extended area trade has many and great openings, though it is best always to work through Arab agency and so avoid popular suspicion.

It is strange how apathetic we were during the war! Not so the Turks, who made their plans in anticipation of a possible victory. In 1916 picked men from Singapore

were sent to Hadramaut to "buy up" Arab chiefs, both there and in the Yemen proper, and including even the Imam Yahya of Sana. The Turkish Consul at Batavia was all active, and reported that the presentation of decorations to Sheikhs and dignitaries of the Yemen and Hadramaut would prevent their being led astray by English intrigue! He recommended a deputation of preachers having a perfect knowledge of Arabic to stimulate a Jihad. One way to counteract such error was ourselves to have sent forth missionaries to proclaim the truth. This is a form of self-advertisement we have never deigned to adopt even in India, and I think we have lost great openings. On the other hand, we English are not built that way, and perhaps there were corresponding advantages to be gained by our silent and unobtrusive labours within our settlement of Aden. A seeming indifference does often puzzle the Asiatic mind, and is so far an asset in itself. Sir Ghalib was much exercised by our masterly inactivity, but I think his anxieties were due to his dawning sense of the hitherto inelastic character of his rule. His isolation from Aden was complete. Emissaries from the Imam were unusually active, although this ruler's plans were not in concert with the Turkish manœuvres, or the proclamations issued from time to time by General Ali Sa'id Pasha from his Headquarters at Lahej. Some of the Hadramaut Saiyids did respond to the Pasha's alluring pictures of coming Turkish ascendancy, but the country as a whole was chiefly concerned over the loss of their trade, and they longed for the end of hostilities, regardless of which side came out victorious.

Hadramaut offers many facilities for the extended cultivation of the tobacco-plant. The trade is in its infancy, and, during the war, our closing by blockade of all the Red Sea ports, save Meidi, greatly hampered the trade and discouraged exports. The salt at Makâtîn al Kabîr and the potash at 'Uthrub might be worked with good profits, and these places are within the sphere of our friend and ally the Sultan of the Lower 'Aulaki tribe.

The late Sultan of Makalla, Sir Ghalib, was not inactive

during the war. He had proposed an alliance with the Mahri Sultan of Kishn and Sokotra. I fancy the latter, Abdallah bin Isa, foresaw ulterior aims of annexation. He wrote to Aden that such overtures were strange and unprecedented. Had he forgotten our similar leaning in 1835, or did he intend a sly hit at our earlier activities? His reply to the Ku'aiti was conclusive: "We have rejected," he said, "the proposal of Sultan Ghalib and his minister, for we do not want to enter into alliance with any other Protector than the British Government." The reply was diplomatic and subtle. He subscribed himself as "The Confider in Allah the Pardoner, Sultan Abdallah b. Isa b. Ahmed b. Tau'ari b. 'Afrâr." The last-named was the progenitor of his House.

Sir Ghalib had offered us his soldiers, but we had no need of them. Had we been more solicitous of expelling the invaders from Lahej, here was a grand occasion to prove to the Turks the assured place we had in the minds of our allies, and this fact would have dispirited even so optimistic a fighter as the Pasha at Lahej. Many offers of Arab assistance were made, but we preferred just to hold the Turk and wear him out by attrition. Our prestige in the Yemen would have been enhanced a thousandfold had we, a Christian Government, been able to show the voluntary alliance with ourselves of our Moslem friends against the Turk, who arrogated to himself the rôle of a Militant Islam fighting the infidel. Such alliance would have gained us far more *kudos* than an independent sortie from Aden and our unaided victory over the Turkish forces. The latter would prove our *taiyâsa*, or virility; the former our virility *plus* our *siyâsa*, or political sagacity. The Arabs required but our lead. As an Arab said to me, *Warri al halîm al najd*: *wa la tuwarri lahu al tarîk*—"Show a wise man the hill, but forbear to show him the road." Which meant to say the Arabs knew the beaten track, and it was only off the track and on difficult ground that they required our guidance. This may serve as the motto of all our future relations with the Arab nation.

THE END

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